

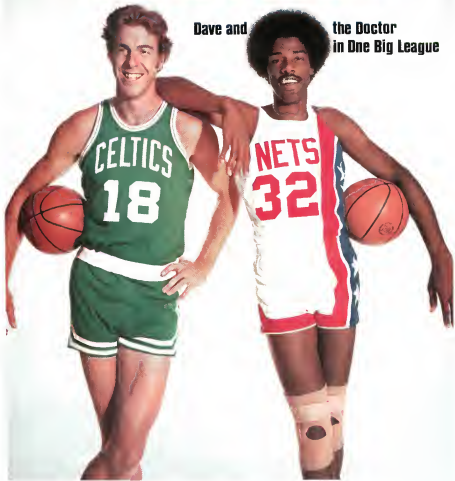
Sports Illustrated

OCTOBER 25, 1976 ONE DOLLAR

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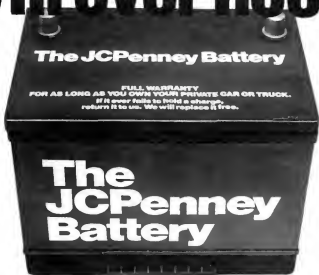
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Next Week

THE VERDICT, FINALLY, on who will be the 1976 world driving champion, as James Hunt gets his last chance to catch defender Niki Lauda in the first Formula One Grand Prix race ever held in Japan.

THE DEFENSE NEVER RESTS in San Francisco, where Tommy Hart and Cedrick Hardman power a sack-happy front four. Now in first place in the NFC West, ahead of favored L.A., the 49ers try Atlanta.

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Pictured: The new 1977 full-size Chevrolet Caprice

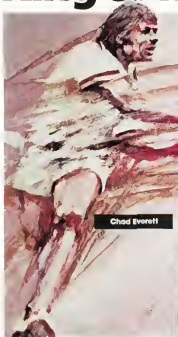


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Arnaz Van Patten	1	0	1.000
Franciscus Puchinelli	1	0	1.000
Everett Hippertel	0	1	.000
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Connelly Perotto	0	2	.000
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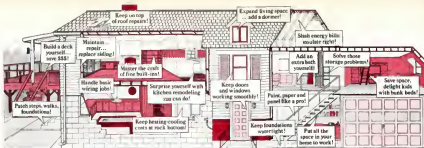
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5 Turntables B I C

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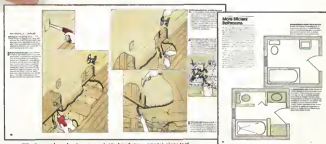


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BOOKTALK

By JEANNETTE BRUCE

AND A FLUTE STUDENT LEARNS A LOT ABOUT MUSIC BUT MORE ABOUT GOLF

George Dessinger of Mount Vernon, N.Y., is a professional musician who plays the flute, piccolo, saxophone, clarinet and bassoon. In between gigs and teaching, he, among others, he plays golf all year long, like the postman, impervious to weather. Fit and tanned at 62, he is a man for whom the word duffer might have been invented. Music is his livelihood; golf is his passion. To take a flute lesson from Dessinger is to learn a lot about golf. When he opens his instrument case, golf books fall out. Most are published by the authors at their own expense. The lowliest pro on a golf tour is probably better known than some of the self-appointed instructors with satellite systems for lowering Dessinger's handicap of 20. He doesn't care. He searches for perfection on the fairway the way a Zen Buddhist years for Nirvana in a temple. He will read anything and try any system at whatever cost.

Fred Akel's *A Different Approach to the Game of Golf* (© 1975 Akel, \$5.95) suggests that all Dessinger need do is find his "dominate side" by studying the direction of the hair whorl on the crown of his head. Most of Dessinger's whorl departed at about age 50; what is left is nondirectional. Allan Starr in *The Easy Way to Lower Your Golf Score* (© 1975 Starr) recommends that the flautist-golfer program his mind with positive pictures of golf balls sailing over water hazards, a method called "psychotrol," but Dessinger is still getting his feet wet. He occasionally invests in gadgets. The instructions that came with a weighted plastic disc suggested he put talcum powder on the carpet before using it. "Not on my carpet," said his wife.

"Most of these secrets don't work for me," says Dessinger, pulling out the *Phil Cooper Golf Improvement Plan* (Lincoln Press, Tulsa), which includes instructions for making a device to show visually the path of a club-head, using two three-by-five index cards and a can of Campbell's soup. It doesn't say whether a golfer should eat the soup first. On to *The Magic Move of Golf* (© 1974 Allan C. Sears). To find your "left chest" place your right fingertips at your throat. Dessinger almost strangled himself. Then just as we raised flutes to lips for our weekly struggle with a Kullius duet, out fluttered Jack Hesse's *How You Can Play Better Golf With Self-Hypnosis*. Dessinger looked embarrassed. "This week," he admitted, "I'm playing off my belly button." All of which goes to prove that where there are golfers there will be books to make a hole-in-one(s) pocket. **END**



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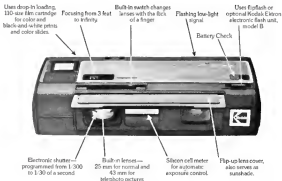
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New Kodak Tele-Instamatic 708 camera.



Shopwalk

by SUSAN KAMR

**FAMOUS PLANES, FASHIONED IN GLASS.
FLY FROM THE FINGERS OF A LOCKSMITH**

There is a curious marriage of hardware and art in New York's A-1 Yorkville locksmith shop at 249 East 77th Street. Bob Gray spends much of his time grinding keys for customers, but behind pick-resistant key cylinders are miniature airplanes and balloons that Gray fashions out of stained glass and sells for as much as \$650.

Stained glass is a forbidding medium to master, it was this challenge to his manual dexterity that lured Gray into using glass to make intricate objects in turn-of-the-century style. His planes are reproduced precisely at 1/4 scale. *Flyer I* was re-created in the same light lime color as Orville Wright's 1903 model and, like the original, has one wing that is slightly shorter to compensate for the weight of the engine and the pilot who lay on the opposite wing. A network of fine brass and copper wires re-create the engine, seat, wheels, propeller and complicated suspension system.

Gray is fascinated with the history behind his fragile creations. Ask about his Blériot XI, Antoinette and Curtiss monoplanes or Farman, Fokker and Wright biplanes, and he will readily scale a ladder for a book to document aviation lore. He talks easily of Louis Blériot's XI, the first plane to cross the English Channel (July 25, 1909). He explains the sleek, fork-tailed Antoinette, a beautiful craft but one that suffered fuel-injection difficulties resulting in several crash landings in the Channel. Said Gray, "If you have a motorboat that is fuel-injected, you can fool around with it in the water, but a plane is something else." He details the first and historic landing made on a ship (in 1910 by Glenn Curtiss' Golden Flyer).

Now 36, Gray came to his craft and calling in a typically New Yorkish way. When he first arrived in Manhattan from his native Detroit he took acting lessons from Lee Strasberg. "Later," he says, "I realized New York needed more locksmiths than actors. I had to support myself." He began stamping out keys and only a few years ago found his creative outlet.

Gray does not turn a profit from his art. The prices, \$350 for planes, \$500 to \$600 for hot-air and gas balloons, represent a return of \$1 per hour for his labor. He has sold only six planes and a replica of a propane balloon that a Texas businessman commissioned. "I am interested in making things that will be passed on, that will live beyond me," Gray says. "And I am happier now than when I was just a locksmith."

END

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Derek Sanderson, Star of the 1984 Olympics

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COUNTRY

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SP4 Bill Robeson, Fort Carson, Colorado

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A color photograph of two soldiers in a wooded area. One soldier, on the left, is sitting on a large rock, wearing a green uniform and looking towards the other soldier. The second soldier, on the right, is also sitting on a rock, wearing a green uniform and a helmet, looking back at the first soldier. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees.

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SCORECARD

Edited by ROBERT W. CREAMER

HAMMERS AND KNIVES

Conversation keeps bubbling about the apparent increase in roughness in the NFL this year, even among the players themselves, although some feel that the press has given it too much attention. Of the biggest wave of publicity, that which swirled around the flogging of Oakland's George Atkinson and Jack Taum after Pittsburgh's Lynn Swann was whacked around in a Raider-Steelers game last month, Merlin Olsen of the Los Angeles Rams said, "I'm not too happy with those fines—not that they weren't deserved. But I think they were levied to calm some angry people. All we need are a couple of irate fans to get drunk up the next time Oakland plays in Pittsburgh and have one of them stick a knife in a player's back. Where would that leave us?"

Olsen and other veterans seem to feel that most NFL people have a professional respect for one another, and that cheap shots are occasional occurrences that are best dealt with by the players themselves on the field. Seattle's Norm Evans, who is in his 12th pro season, recalls Fred (The Hammer) Williamson, onetime terror of the Oakland defense, who eventually was sidelined permanently with a knee injury. "For a while," says Evans, "all I heard about was Freddie the Hammer and how mean he was. But then all of a sudden he was out of football."

Some don't believe that this eye-for-an-eye philosophy keeps excessive violence under control. Claude Humphrey, Atlanta Falcon defensive end, says, "If you can get Lawrence McCutcheon or James Harris out of there when you play the Rams, you've got a hell of a chance to win, and that's what it's all about. If Swann has a chance to catch a touchdown pass, why not hit him? It's just football. That's why it's the No. 1 sport. On a Sunday afternoon the fans get to screaming and they want to see somebody get hit." Ken Stone of Tampa Bay says, "From high school on, we're taught different kinds of arm tackling and

clotheslining. It's all part of a violent game, and that's what people pay to see."

Those who prefer the daring grace and accomplishment of a healthy Gale Sayers, a healthy Joe Namath or, for that matter, a healthy Lynn Swann, may disagree.

OLD SPARK

Sparky Anderson, manager of the Cincinnati Reds since 1970, in praising the appointment of Joe Altobelli as manager of the San Francisco Giants, described Altobelli as "one of the best young managers in the game."

Altobelli is 44. Anderson, the old savant, is 42.

SAVERS

With all the dreary things ABC-TV did to the pennant playoffs—the amateurish announcing of Keith Jackson and Warner Wolf, the tiresome banalities of Howard Cosell, the intolerable number of commercials and promotions crammed between each half inning—it was a relief to note some plus factors. With few exceptions, the broadcasting efforts of Reggie Jackson and Tom Seaver made up for a lot of the gaffes committed by the so-called professionals. Some ball-players are flops on the air; these two have careers ahead of them when they pack it in on the field. Give ABC credit for that.

BABY TALK

Evonne Goolagong's pregnancy—she and her husband Roger Cawley are expecting their first child next May—could stir up women's tennis the way Margaret Smith Court's blessed event did in 1971. At that time Court and Billie Jean King dominated the game pretty much the way Goolagong and Chris Evert do now. But when Court went off to the obstetrician's, Evonne and Chris began their rapid climb to fame and fortune, fighting at first for the right to challenge Billie Jean and eventually superseding her. Now the same sort of opportunity

is in the offing for bright young players like Sue Barker, Dianne Fromholtz, Mima Jausovec and Natasha Chmyreva, who have been frustrated up to now by the overpowering presence of both Goolagong and Evert. Never underestimate a mother's influence.

UNMELANCHOLY DANE

Torben Ulrich is two years shy of being 50, yet he wears his hair in a ponytail, sports a beard and enjoys staying up most of the night in cellar clubs listening to jazz. He should be a physical wreck but he's not. A native of Denmark and once a first-line international tennis player, he is currently a star in Grand Masters (over 45) tennis competition, runs 50 to 75 miles a week, pops vitamins and is bursting with health.

"Running is so cleansing," he says. "A lot of dirt leaves your system, a lot of garbage goes." He does stretching exercises to keep his body limber. In competition he relies on "years of experience to counterbalance slowing down. There is a purification in discipline."

Ulrich is something of an evangelist on the subject of people staying active



in sport as they grow older. He says the attitude that vigorous play is somehow wrong for older people is mostly psychological. "The whole approach to growing older in athletics is changing," he claims. "The old generation today grew old without being aware of athletics for them. My generation is just becoming aware. But look ahead 20 to 40 years. People who grow old playing will stay in athletics. We know more of stamina, speed, care of injuries, training, over-

continued

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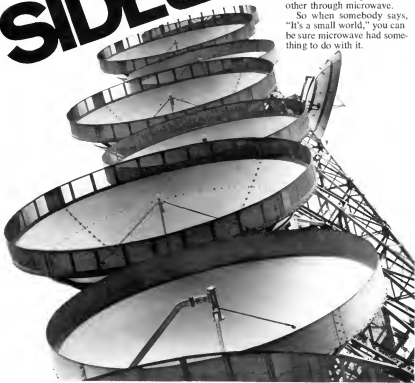
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training, stretching, flexibility, vitamins."

Not surprisingly, Ulrich prefers tennis as a sport for older people. "It's about halfway between golf and all-out physical effort, like an 800-meter run," he says. But he favors participation in other sports, too, even baseball. In the future, he suggests, "Maybe there will be a decrease in feelings hounding a person from playing baseball at older ages."

HIGH TIME

Banghi is a 3-year-old thoroughbred who seems constantly to have his name mispronounced as "Bang-High." Since he is currently running quite well (second in both the Lawrence Realization and the Man o' War at Belmont Park), we would like to set the record straight. His name is pronounced "Bangy." Banghi, a word derived from Hindi, means marijuana, and some of the younger horseplayers have noted that his best races, for one reason or another, are on grass.

FULLER EXPLANATION

A couple of weeks ago we ran a quiz in which you were asked to match a list of 16 terms taken from Webster's Sports Dictionary with their appropriate sports. The terms were rather esoteric, and so far nobody has claimed to have gotten even half of them right. Although we gave an answer key, matching terms and sports, several readers have asked for definitions, too. Here goes:

Mongolian draw (Archery): a method of drawing back a bowstring. **Moebius flip** (Skiing): a forward or backward flip with a full twist, performed during a jump. **Death spiral** (Figure skating): in pairs, where the couple spins in place, the man holding the woman outstretched with her head just above the surface of the ice. **Cuban fork ball** (Baseball): a pitch suspected of being a spitball. **Crab and** (Wrestling): a hold in which one competitor is behind and under the other. **Belly roll** (Track and field): a high-jumping technique in which the jumper leads with the leg farthest from the bar, "rolls over" the bar on his stomach and lets the trailing leg follow. **Wheel sucker** (Cycling): a rider adept at utilizing the slipstream from another rider to conserve energy. **Tight scrum** (Rugby): a formation in which players from both sides join to form a tunnel into which the ball is tossed to restart play. **Swedish box** (Gymnastics): a vaulting apparatus consisting of a series of rectangular frames graded in

size. **Running English** (Billiards): spin imparted to the cue ball to make it come off a cushion or another ball at an increasing angle. **Pumpkin ball** (Hunting): a solid metal ball or rifled slug, used for big game. **Penholder grip** (Table tennis): a grip in which the handle of the paddle is held the way you would hold a pen or pencil. **Nasmith's formula** (Hiking): a method of estimating the time a hike should take—one hour for every three miles, plus an hour for every 2,000 feet of climbing. **Murphy blind** (Harness racing): leather attached to a bridle to obstruct a horse's vision on one side and thus overcome its tendency to turn to that side. **Ice screw** (Mountain climbing): a metal spike that is screwed into ice instead of hammering in a piston. **Gunkholing** (Sailing): sailing a small boat in shallow water along a coastline.

WHIPPERSNAPPER

Bert Jones, the Baltimore Colt quarterback, has moved beyond Earl Morrall to become the No. 2 passer in Colt history. Jones' tosses have gained 5,930 yards.

He still has a way to go. The No. 1 passer in Colt history has 39,768 yards.

ROSI

If you've been wondering whatever happened to Rosi Mittermaier, the West German girl with the big smile who caught the imagination of the world at the Winter Olympics last February when she won two golds and a silver in Alpine skiing, she's doing just fine. Rosi, sometimes called the grandma of international skiing because of her advanced age—she's 26, you know—has turned pro and could make as much as \$500,000 in the next year. Most of that will come from endorsements and participation in special events, such as ABC's *Superstars* and CBS' *Battle of the Sexes*.

Mittermaier will take part in professional ski races "only if the competition is interesting." Right now, she says, "There are too few races and too few women to race against." And possibly not enough prize money.

Rosi's lucrative commercial tie-ups are with four German firms: Fritzmeier, one of the top European ski manufacturers; Klemm, a ski-pole maker; Braun, a ski-clothing company; and Adidas, the shoe manufacturer, which is pushing a line of "Rosi Mittermaier leisure suits." The Fritzmeier connection is interesting. Rosi had used Fritzmeier skis ever since she

was a teen-ager but switched to Dynamic a year before the Innsbruck Games and then won the Olympics on them. But Dynamic couldn't meet Fritzmeier's bid for her services, so she made a tight parallel turn and switched back.

YOU'RE THE TOP

It was noted earlier in the baseball season that while hitters who win batting titles and home-run championships get the publicity, the most valuable players tend to be the ones who sit at or near the top in runs produced (a figure arrived at by adding runs scored to runs batted in and subtracting home runs). Last season, for example, Joe Morgan of the Reds and Fred Lynn of the Red Sox were first in none of the Triple Crown categories, yet each led his league in runs produced and each was named Most Valuable Player.

Here are the top 10 in each league this season in runs produced:

AMERICAN	NATIONAL
Carew, Minn 178	Morgan, Cinn 197
Munson, NY 167	Rose, Cinn 183
Hsieh, Minn 164	Schmidt, Phil 181
Otis, KC 161	Griffey, Cinn 179
Chambliss, NY 158	Foster, Cinn 178
Mayberry, KC 157	Watson, Hou 162
White, NY 155	Parker, Pitt 159
Rivers, NY 154	Zisk, Pitt 159
Brett, KC 154	Cedeno, Hou 154
Staub, Det 154	Garvey, LA 152
	Monday, Chi 152

THEY SAID IT

● Al Hanlon, in charge of preparing football schedules for the University of Maryland: "I'll tell you how far in advance we schedule. We have two open dates left before 1990."

● Ray Floyd, pro golfer, explaining why his expenses on the tour are \$60,000, twice what the average pro spends: "If you travel first class, you think first class, and you're more likely to play first class."

● Chuck Mills, Wake Forest football coach: "I give the same halftime speech over and over. It works best when my players are better than the other coach's players."

● Alois Blackwell, University of Houston running back, on why he chose to play under Coach Bill Yeoman, developer of the Veer-T offense: "I always wanted to play for someone who invented something. Why take a piece of cake from just anybody when you can get one from Betty Crocker?"



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THE MACHINE WAS IN HIGH GEAR

Only once in the first two games did the usually aggressive Yanks try to steal, and it ended with a Bench to Morgan throw easily nabbing fast Mickey Rivers



As the World Series began, the Red's hit on all cylinders, running over the Yankees in the first game and sideswiping Catfish in the second **by Ron Finette**

GAME 1 The Yankees do not subscribe to the notion that, while they are but flesh and blood, the Reds are precision parts in some kind of mechanical device. Even after the Big Red Machine had rolled over them 5-1 in the opening game of the 1976 World Series, the Yanks remained unconvinced that they were competing against indestructible automatons. Consider the reaction of the all-too-human Yankee catcher, Thurman Munson, to the suggestion that the Red Machine seemed to "execute" well. "You talk about execution," he said. "If some of the balls we hit in the alleys had fallen in like theirs, you'd have to say we executed well."

Alas, balls hit by Yankees found only culs-de-sac in the indifferently played and strangely undramatic opener at Cincinnati's Riverfront Stadium. The Reds, chastised afterward by Manager Sparky Anderson for nonaggressiveness, did execute, and the Yanks for the most part did not. The events of the sixth inning, when Cincinnati was nursing a 2-1 lead, were representative. In the New York half of the inning, Fred Stanley led off with a walk. He was forced at second when Reds starter Don Gullett made a fine play on Mickey Rivers' bunt try for a base hit. Cincinnati Catcher Johnny Bench then easily threw out Rivers on an attempted steal. Roy White hit a drive to left center that should have been the third out, but it was dropped by the ordinarily impeccable Cesar Geronimo for a two-base error. When Munson singled to right, White was wisely held at third in deference to Ken Griffey's formidable throwing arm. Lou Piniella finally ended

the inning by blooming to Joe Morgan near second. The scorecard showed that the first four batters all had reached base—and that none had scored. In the bottom half of the inning the Reds worked with typical economy. Griffey reached first on a fielder's choice, stole second as Morgan struck out and scored the Reds' third run on Tony Perez' third straight hit.

The Reds rarely waste a scoring opportunity, and at least in this regard they were their usual selves. In the first inning Morgan hit one of surprise Yankee starter Doyle Alexander's infrequent fastballs into the right-field stands; in the third Dave Concepcion tripled down an open Yankee alley in left center and crossed the plate on Pete Rose's sacri-

fice fly; and in the seventh George Foster singled and scored on Bench's triple off the right-field wall. Bench came in with the fifth run when Yankee reliever Sparky Lyle wild-pitched. The mechanized win was not without its human consequences. Pitching to Rivers in the eighth, Gullett twisted an ankle and left the game after White's subsequent single. The injury was diagnosed as a tendon dislocation, and Gullett's leg was placed in a cast. He was through for the Series. That Gullett, who has been the Reds' best pitcher in the last month or so, would not work again was the one encouraging result of the opener for New York, which had reached him for only five hits.

The lone Yankee run, scored in the

continued

Morgan got Cincinnati off to a booming start with a home run in the first inning of the first game



second, was efficient, if insufficient. Piniella led off with a double to right and was advanced to third when Chris Chambliss grounded properly to the right side. Graig Nettles then brought Piniella home with a sacrifice. At that point the Yankees—in years past the team everyone wanted to break up—seemed on the verge of earning for themselves some modern technological appellation.

It was ironic that the only machine the New Yorkers employed all day was shut down by Commissioner Bowie Kuhn. It had been the Yankees' practice in the American League playoffs against Kansas City to place one of their functionaries in the stands with a walkie-talkie, the better to advise Manager Billy Martin on the positioning of his outfielders. The "audio communications system" was approved for the Series by the commissioner after the Reds had agreed that it could do no appreciable harm. Unfortunately, the grandstand communicators on this day, Scouts Clyde King, Birdie Tebbets and Karl Kuehl, did not seat themselves among the paying customers. Instead they moved into a CBS booth, far too close, the commissioner decided, to television monitors. Even though skulduggery was never seriously alleged, the scouts were taken off the air just in case the temptation to pick up Bench's signs on TV and relay them to Yankee hitters became impossible to resist.

The silencing generated a predictable squawk from the contentious Martin. It also produced some rare humor in this otherwise solemn event. Bench, who often is heard on the airwaves around Cincinnati using the handle Sidewinder, suggested that he might bring his own CB to succeeding games, tune Martin in and inquire of his "good buddy" what traffic conditions were like around second base. And Martin allowed us to howl the next time the commissioner was on the premises, he would advise his broadcasters, "There's a Smokey on the line."

The matter was resolved later when all parties conceded that the Yanks could take the air if their men sat in locations away from the press box.

The Yanks needed a lot more than a walkie-talkie in the stands on a day in which they played listlessly. It was agreed even by the most spirited among them that their frantic clash with the Royals in the playoffs had sapped them of much World Series pizzazz. "This game didn't seem like anything compared with the

last one [the 7-6 playoff climax two days earlier], and that wasn't all that long ago," said Munson. "This game was flatter. There was a lot of pressure in the last one. This was my first Series game, but it was not what I felt it would be. The last game of the playoffs is what I thought this Series game would be like."

Indeed, no fan demonstration comparable to the one that had all but dismantled Yankee Stadium accompanied this match at Riverfront. The Cincinnati papers had devoted much space before the opener to scolding New York fans for their destructiveness and applauding the Reds' fans for their mannerliness. GOOD THING SERIES OPENS HERE, headlined *The Cincinnati Post*. And fans at Riverfront responded to the opening win with commendable decorum. Oh, there were incidents. Rose observed that disorderly spectators had tossed two hot-dog wrappers onto left field late in the game. "But," he hastily added in their defense, "the hot dogs weren't in them."

GAME 2

"You should be careful not to think too much of yourselves," Cincinnati

players were counseled at prayer services only an hour before this historic contest. "And," the Rev. Jerry Kirk intoned, covering all bases, "you must be careful not to think too little of yourselves." The Reds nodded their assent, and in the space of the next two hours and 33 minutes they found the truth of this ambiguous message.

They began the game as if not even Catfish Hunter, unbeaten till then in World Series play, could impede them. They finished it awash with humility. In truth, their 4-3 win was not so much the product of their own skills but of Yankee bad luck in both tactics and execution. Compared with the previous day's pollid encounter, this game, the first played on a Sunday evening in Series history, was a thriller reminiscent of the Reds-Red Sox matches a year ago.

It was played in temperatures better suited to ice fishing. It was a comparatively moderate 43° at game time—despite forecasts that had predicted temperatures in the 30s or even the 20s—but by the climactic ninth inning the thermometer had dropped perhaps five degrees. That baseball is not meant to

be played after 8 p.m. anywhere north of St. Petersburg, Fla. after Oct. 15 had been ignored by the commissioner and the television executives who were responsible for such bizarre scheduling.

The guilty parties were reprieved by some superb play on the geld AstroTurf. The Reds began as if to hammer Hunter into the ice floe. For four innings they launched his fastball into all the crannies of Riverfront, hitting, as it were, frozen ropes. In this productive stretch, they reached the multimillionaire, whose previous Series record was 4-0, for five singles, two doubles, a triple and three walks. And yet they scored only three runs, all in the second inning.

Dan Driessen, the first designated hitter in National League history, led off with a double to dead center field. Foster singled him home, then was erased when Munson tossed him out on a steal attempt. That did not seem to be an important gaffe at the time, but Bench followed with a double that would have eliminated the necessity of later heroics. Geronimo walked. Conception singled to score Bench and, after Rose walked,



Griffey fled to shallow center. Geronimo tagged up and seared as Rivers' throw from the outfield bounced twice to Munson. All of this came so easily that Reds' fans, shivering in their seats, expected to see much, much more. But thereafter, Hunter, pitching expertly to the corners and inducing a succession of impressive but harmless fly balls, shut out Cincy until the bitter end.

The Yankees, meanwhile, pecked away at the Reds' starter, graying left-hander Fred Norman. In the fourth, Nettles singled home Munson, who had reached first on an infield hit and advanced to second on Chambliss' single. In the seventh, the Yankees tied the game. Willie Randolph led off with a single to center, little Stanley of subsequent woe looped a feeble but well-directed double down the left-field line and Randolph, who had been running with the pitch, scored. After Rivers fled to center, White singled sharply to left—too sharply to score Stanley. This finished Norman and brought on righthander Jack Billingham. He got Munson to bounce a little nubber to Morgan, whose only play was to force

White at second as Stanley crossed home with the tying run.

An impasse seemed to have been achieved as both sides fended off the other with acrobatic defenses. Munson, who earlier had fielded a Morgan pop foul against the stands, outdid himself in the seventh, leaning into an enclosure bristling with cameras to capture another off the same victim. And in the eighth, Perez leaped high to deprive Nettles of an almost certain double down the right-field line. In both games, Nettles sent scorers about the ballpark, but each somehow found a Reds' glove. As a result, he had only one hit, prompting from Martin the sour grapes observation, "Every time we hit a line drive, it's caught. Every time they hit a blooper, it falls in."

Billingham extinguished the Yankees easily in the top of the ninth, and it appeared that Hunter, who had allowed but one hit from the fifth through the eighth, would achieve similar results in the Reds' half. Concepcion lofted to center, and Rose, who endured a fate similar to Nettles' through the two games, fled out to left. The next hitter, Griffey, slowly



Geronimo scores in Cincy's second-inning rally.

bounced what appeared to be the third out toward short. Every Yankee infielder had been amply briefed on Griffey's considerable talent at beating out infield hits; he has had more than 30 of them in each of the last two seasons, and Stanley must have been tossing this over in his mind as he scurried toward this hopper. "The only thing I can do is try to get rid of it," he was to lament later. "If I take another step, he's safe. I'm throwing across my body. I don't have a chance to plant my feet. I could have taken it easy, taken an extra step and been surer of my throw, but then he would have been safe. I tried to get him out."

It was an unhappy gamble. Stanley's hurried throw sailed past Chambliss, and Griffey went to second base. It is here that Yankee tactics came a cropper. Martin decided to walk Morgan in the hope that Perez could be induced to make the third out. "Hunter was having pretty good luck with Perez, and he wanted to pitch to him," said Martin. "I'd rather pitch to him than to Morgan, too."

The walk seemed well advised. Morgan had reached Hunter for a single and a triple, while Perez had singled, popped up twice and fled out. The first pitch Hunter threw to him in the ninth was a high fastball. Perez lined it into left, and Griffey sped home as the chilled 34,816 fans screamed with pleasure. Their team had won and taken a 2-0 lead in the Series. And now they could go home to warm beds and curse those who had kept them out so late on such a night. **END**

The pivotal play of Game 2: Griffey is safe as Chambliss reaches vainly for Stanley's wide peg





CAN'T ANYBODY CATCH THE FOOTBALL?

That's what Quarterback Roger Staubach kept asking as his usually sure-handed Dallas receivers kept dropping touchdown passes while the Cowboys were dropping their first game of the season to the St. Louis Cardinals **by Dan Jenkins**

A funny thing happened to Roger Staubach last Sunday just when he was on the way to having his arm bronzed. In the chill of St. Louis' Busch Memorial Stadium the last of pro football's undefeated and untied teams, Staubach's Dallas Cowboys, decided to lose a game to the Cardinals no matter how many times Roger hit his usually reliable receivers in the hands. Staubach, off to the grandest start of any quarterback in the history of the sport, had another fine afternoon against the Cardinals. He threw six touchdown passes. The only thing wrong was that just two of them counted, and thus the Cardinals of Jim Hart and Mel Gray and Terry Metcalf managed to come out on top in a 21-17 game that could be called a thriller only because of the peculiar way the ball kept bouncing off the palms of the Cowboys.

Appropriately enough, the Cowboys started and ended the contest by dropping passes from Staubach that would have been certain touchdowns. The first

pass Roger threw came on the game's eighth play, which originated at the Cardinals' 43-yard line. It was one of those blackboard things, with everything developing perfectly. Roger hurled a gorgeous spiral to Running Back Charles Young, who had left the defensive guys so far behind they might as well have been pompon girls.

The ball arrived in Young's hands at about the St. Louis 15. He juggled it once while churning straight ahead. He juggled it twice. He juggled it a third time, looking very much as if he had some sort of strange itch and the football was responsible. Finally, Young dropped the ball, and the play wound up being nothing more than another incomplection, something Staubach has not been terribly familiar with in 1976. He had come into the season's sixth weekend with a 73.5 completion percentage and a quarterback "rating" of 121.0.

Nobody understands the NFL's quarterback rating system—it has to do with

all manner of completions and yardage and attempts and so forth—but the important thing about Staubach's 121.0 was that the best anyone had ever done over a full season was the 110.0 by Cleveland's Milt Plum back in 1960. Earlier in the week Dallas Coach Tom Landry had said, rather prophetically as it turned out, "Roger has always been a good quarterback. But this is just an exceptional streak. It's unlikely that anyone can keep it up."

Staubach not only would have kept it up, he would have kept the Cowboys' record clean if he had only a little help from his friends, the receivers. For example, take the day's very last play when, incredibly, Dallas still could win the game it had been trying to lose for three hours. Operating with no time-outs left, Staubach had completed four throws and moved the Cowboys to the St. Louis 21-yard line. There were three seconds left, and everyone knew Roger would put it up—and into the end zone. They also

A heap of frustration: Staubach watches as the Cardinals bury Charles Young inches from a TD.

knew that the Cowboys would have somebody open, as they had throughout the four quarters.

The open man was the giant tight end, Billy Joe DuPree, towering above the defenders and racing full speed across the goal line as Staubach's pass got there. DuPree reached up to make the winning grab, but the ball, as it had been doing all afternoon, simply glanced off his hands and fluttered away.

So that was Staubach's last touchdown pass that did not count. The other two came in the fourth quarter after the Cowboys had fallen behind by 21-10. One of them was unbelievably dropped by Drew Pearson, who, like Young earlier, had beaten the defense and was sailing toward the end zone at the Cardinals' five-yard line. Drew Pearson can normally catch a comet if you give him enough warning. Not this day. Pearson also dropped a pass, right in his hands, in the second quarter that would have put the Cowboys in serious scoring position.

The other touchdown pass that did not count was Staubach's own fault. Coming out of a scramble, he made the mistake of drifting just past the line of scrimmage before he lofted a deep one that Golden Richards cradled away near the goal line and carried into the end zone. It was a 41-yard throw, but the ball had been snapped to Staubach on the 42.

For the day, Staubach's statistics read 21 completions in 42 attempts for 250 yards—and his eighth and ninth touchdowns of the year. But the more telling figure was that, overall, he had eight passes—eight, mind you—clearly and notoriously and dreadfully dropped.

Aside from all this, the Cowboys made innumerable other blunders. They recovered a St. Louis fumble on the Cardinal 20 but did nothing with it. They blocked a St. Louis punt and recovered the ball on the Cardinal eight-yard line but did not score a single point. And one of the Jim Hart passes they batted into the air managed to come right down into the gritty hands of that wonderful guy, Mel Gray, for the touchdown that gave the Cardinals their 21-10 lead and wound up being the difference.

In the light of all the Dallas boners, it was amusing to hear the Busch Memorial Stadium crowd yelling so happily for the recently lamented Cardinal defense. The Cardinal defense had almost nothing to do with all of those dropped passes. However it did distinguish itself on the goal-line stand after Charlie Waters had blocked the punt and Dallas had a first down at the St. Louis eight. Three running plays by Doug Dennison and Young gained seven yards and two feet. On fourth down the Cowboys sent Young over right guard, a good place to run, it seemed, since the Cardinals were down to their backup middle linebacker, a fellow named Tim Kearney. All Kearney did was stop Young and the play.

Actually, it was the St. Louis offense that won the game, along with the bouncing ball. Hart had the sort of day Staubach has been having, connecting on 22 of 33 for a whopping 346 yards, and the three touchdowns. Gray caught two of them, and there was considerable show biz involved. Gray had a reason. "They were bad-mouthin' me all day, the whole secondary, not just Cliff Harris," Gray said. "They said I had bad hands and no speed." Which seems an ill-considered remark to make to a fellow who has been known to burn 9.2 in the 100.

After Gray's first touchdown catch, he flipped the ball at Harris, and Harris batted it back as if it were a volleyball.

And then when Harris leaped and bat-

ted the ball in the end zone and it came down, fortuitously, into Gray's hands for the decisive St. Louis score, Gray dashed over, looked down at Harris and Benny Barnes sprawled on the Busch Stadium rug and hauled off and spiked the ball right between them.

"It's not a personal feud with Harris," Gray said. "I have these days with Washington's Pat Fischer and Philadelphia's Bill Bradley, too."

This was the third straight year the Cardinals had beaten the Cowboys in St. Louis. Tex Schramm, the Cowboys' venerable general manager, is certain he knows why. It is because the Cardinals insist that the Cowboys wear their blue jerseys when they come to town. It is widely known that Schramm has been superstitious of the Cowboys' blue jerseys ever since they lost their first Super Bowl wearing blue against Baltimore.

What the St. Louis upset of the Cowboys really did was to give the NFC East that old familiar look. The Cardinals and Cowboys are now tied at 5-1, and the struggling Washington Redskins are right behind at 4-2. All things normal.

So for now, anyway, Staubach can relax and stop competing with immortality. When he went 13 out of 15 against the New York Giants, he was permitted to joke, "Yeah, they dropped a couple on me." Last Sunday the Cowboys dropped everything except The Star-Spangled Banner.

END

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER DOBBS JR.



The best arm in the game fired all too often to receivers who could not get a grip on the ball.

ELEMENTAL, IF NOT EXACTLY ARTISTIC



Stolid and ponderous, Foreman gave ample warning before every blow but eventually found the range on poor Dennis, who was hardly an elusive target

After last month's tepid Ali-Norton title fight, two dependable punchers got back to the basics. George Foreman battered an immature white hope, Dino Dennis, and Roberto Duran savagely dispatched another patsy, Alvaro Rojas **by Mark Kram**

A puncher, the kind that can suddenly eviscerate your heart and will, is a rare and wondrous creature. The pedigree is barely visible today, having fallen victim to the rising expectations among the young poor. "They all wanna be muggers now," complains Paddy Flood, one of the best of fight managers. "Or, if you do get 'em in the ring, they wanna be hoofers like Ali." Flood is just one of many managers who have waited for years in fetid gyms, listening for the sound of an animal in the distance, searching for the meanness behind a pair of sullen, antisocial eyes. There is no roar or flash to their presence when they do turn to the ring, just something deadly metallic, like a bullet clicking into a rifle chamber. It is a beautiful sound.

Two of the best, if not classical, punchers in the business shifted the major boxing scene to Hollywood, Fla. last week—namely, heavyweight George Foreman and lightweight champion Roberto Du-

ran. With the brutal clarity of Duran and the messy avalanche that is Foreman, boxing left behind the abjectly vague title defense by Ali against hesitant Ken Norton, moved downwind from Ali's last-bull declaration of retirement and returned to its most elemental form on national television—freeing humans from their faculties. The victims were Dino Dennis and Alvaro Rojas.

"God is always on the side of the puncher," Foreman likes to say. The money is, too. Foreman collected \$450,000 from Don King and CBS, both of whom are delirious over their ungainly barbarian. CBS prizes him for the quality of violence. King, the promoter with a million aphorisms, all of them so bad that they're good, sees George as the poleax over the heads of Ali and his manager Herbert Muhammad, who dropped King as if his hair were truly electrified. King has gone to conspicuous lengths to court Foreman; it is a wise but risky gam-

ble, if one considers George's history of alliances and his suspicious nature. At the moment, Foreman is the heavyweight division, and he may indeed be a blood-curdling show on television—which is observed by any number of inept eyes. Up close, live, Foreman is hardly the executioner television presents. Of all the name heavyweights past and present, none has been slower than the big Texan. He throws a jab as if he had an icebox on the end of his hand. The time between the start of a punch and when it lands is so long that *War and Peace* could be carved on his glove with a penknife. He cannot think in the ring; he is purely a beast of nature, absolutely oblivious to the functions of his job.

More serious, though, is Foreman's complete lack of stamina, a flaw that Ali exposed in Zaire. Ever since then, after Foreman's return from bewilderment and lostness, the word has been this: take him past five or six rounds and he becomes

just a huge piece of clay to be worked into easy form. That was on the mind of Dennis. He was young (24), he thought, and undefeated in 29 fights; he could move well, maybe do some sharp point work—in on Foreman quickly, flurry some, then out to the side even quicker—and he might steal a decision. There was more to be gained: \$110,000 and that most elusive of things in the ring—an identifiable name with the public.

White, Italian and from Rocky Marciano country (the Providence, R.I. area), Dennis would have been placed in a nice little box and then put in the window at Cartier's had he won. "Platinum gold" was the way King described Dennis to the Miami press, which had responded sluggishly to his waves of superlatives. They never did buy Dennis. As it was, about 6,000 came to the Sportatorium to gawk at Foreman and hope with Dennis and his aggressive corner. The hope lasted 2½ rounds, then the 238-pound Foreman blasted Dennis in the stomach with a right hand. The Cartier window, it was evident, would soon be in shards. Dennis' right hand leads, few as they were, came no more; the jab wilted into a drooping left hand that was stuck to his chin for survival.

Physically immature and without the kind of a cracking punch to keep a big man off, Dennis floated serenely toward the quicksand of the ropes. It was here that Foreman pawed him with a heavy left hand and turned his eyes to glass. It was here also that Dennis' corner, led by co-Manager Al Braverman, made that part of the ring a small version of the Johnstown Flood—influently, so far as Foreman's corner was concerned. "The water, the water!" screamed Foreman's trainer Gil Clancy, showering it upon his fighter. Rights and lefts chased the water from Dennis' head, but still it came—in buckets now. At the end of the round, Dennis was on his knees. Had he been drowned by Braverman?

Braverman carried Dennis back to the corner, and he answered the bell for the fourth. More punishment descended on Dennis, and now Braverman was half-way up the ring apron with wet towels, which were being handed to him. At this point a state trooper behind Dennis' corner took the big bucket of water away from one of the handlers. "You gotta stop

this," the cop yelled. "The people at ring-side are getting drowned."

"Wait a minute," said Paddy Flood, who was working with Braverman. "Look, officer, how would you like it if I took your pistol away?"

"I wouldn't like it. You wouldn't, either, pal."

"Well, this bucket is his pistol," said Flood. "You can't take his pistol away." He then looked up and yelled in Braverman, "Al, Al! Don't throw it on Foreman. You're hittin' Foreman! You're gonna wake him up. He's half dead already!"

Flood was right. Foreman, his arms rolling eerily like heavy tree branches in a high wind, was near exhaustion, but not even that, nor all the water in Biscayne Bay was going to spare Dino Dennis. The fight was stopped at 2:25 of the fourth round. In his dressing room, Dennis had no excuses. "This was a big fight for me," he said. "I came apart. My nerves got to me. The tension got me. It made me tired, and I didn't do anything right."

Said Braverman, "He's still a baby." The baby took eight stitches over his right eye. Why didn't Braverman stop the fight sooner? "I had to see, to be sure," said Al. "Foreman was so tired. I thought he might drop over any second."

Dennis' heart and Braverman's water ballet saved the night for King and television, for the Duran-Rojas title fight, which went on first, was a ridiculous affair. "This was the 26th time he's knocked out Rojas," said a Panamanian. "He's knocked him out 25 other times in the gym." An exaggeration, no doubt, but there is little question that Rojas was a pitiful opponent for the furious punches of Duran. Rojas was knocked out at 2:17 of the first round, leaving him unconscious for a long time. Duran is a little assassin, a quick volume puncher with a fine mean streak in him, yet the Panamanians and the game-playing WBA (the head of it is Dr. Elasm Cordova Jr., a Panamanian who is related to Duran's manager) have clamped a lock on the lightweight title, tough lightweights like Edwin Viruet are ducked forever.

On his knees, Dennis had either been drowned by Foreman or drowned by his own water bucket

"Why did you make this match?" King was asked. "Fights like this killed boxing on television."

"It's not my fault," he protested. "The WBA forced me into it."

"Duran does not deserve \$125,000 for an opponent like Rojas, does he?"

King just shook his head, then turned the subject back to Foreman, whom he calls his "duration champion," implying that if Ali does come back he should not have the privileges of a champion, that he and Foreman should meet even-up, financially. That surely would be a bout worth seeing: the cerebral Ali, his physical gifts in a sorry state, against Foreman, the magnificent beast or bum, depending on your ring esthetics. It would be hard to bet against Ali, for George Foreman has never been the same since Zaire, and he seems to be a troubled man, often a brooding recluse, forever alert for unseen villains.

The night before each fight now, he has three different meals brought to him by three different aides. No one knows which meal he will choose, or from where it will come. George Foreman, you see, is afraid of being poisoned.

END

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHIAU-LING





Fred Akers has his own brand of wishbone.

The best thing about the University of Wyoming's experiencing another renaissance in football—once again slamming favored opponents, once again scratching back to the top of the tough, talented and too often neglected Western Athletic Conference after seven years in the valley of the shadow—is that it allows an opportunity to clear up some misconceptions. Coach Fred Akers, for one, admits he believed Wyoming to be no more than three blocks from the Canadian border when he was asked up from Texas to take the head coaching job two years ago. Blizzards in July is what Wyoming meant to Akers. And a predominantly Eskimo population.

Being as fast a learner as he is a mover, which is, as we shall see, plenty fast, it did not take Akers long to find out that Wyoming is a few blocks farther south than that. Or that there are no blizzards in July, only an occasional snowstorm (he was trapped in one going to Medicine Bow to give a pep talk last summer). And that the beguiling irregularities of the weather are such that even in late October one might awaken to the kind of breathtakingly beautiful day that the lucky ones there in Laramie awakened to last Saturday. There in shirt sleeves—well, would you believe alpaca sweat-

SELDOM IS HEARD A DISCOURAGING WORD

Out where the deer and the antelope and the Cowboys play, all is optimism now that surprising Wyoming has taken the lead in the Western Athletic Conference
by John Underwood

ers—they were treated to a breathtakingly typical WAC game, this one won by Wyoming over New Mexico 24-23.

The trouble with Wyoming has always been that it goes mostly unwitnessed. Besides Curt Gowdy, no one seems to have been there long enough to tell you anything about it. When you have said that it pushes up along the Great Divide, 7,000 feet high on the nation's backbone, and is pinned into Eastern TV spot-news oblivion by the Mountain Time Zone, you have said about as much as is ever said. Kevin McClain, the team's best defensive back and one of its four captains, came to Laramie straight from Denville, N.J. Looking out the window on that first airplane ride, Kevin recalls saying aloud to himself, "My God, what's that?"

What that was was wide-open spaces. Fewer people per unpolluted square mile than any state in the union except Alaska. Air so free of debris that everything—the finger ranges of the Rockies on both sides of Laramie, the sandstone university buildings, the deer and the antelope playing—appears in peculiarly sharp focus, like the C. M. Russell prints on the walls of the Holiday Inn. No slums allowed in Wyoming. No snobs, either. A man exercises his ambition to wear his cowboy hat anywhere, cocked over his forehead. And his scruffy pointed boots. And his engraved belt buckle the size of a hubcap tethered just below his proud, round, he-man belly. Guys like Kevin McClain say you come to appreciate these things and before you know it you're not even going home for Christmas, much less summer vacation.

Next, consider the slightly sensational Wyoming football fan. To say he "loves the Cowboys," a description that often follows his professional and familial statistics ("This here's Billy Jones. He runs the bank and has four kids, and loves the Cowboys"), is to put it mildly. He travels the breadth of the state—8, 10, 14 hours—to make a game. He will engage special game-day trains on the

Union Pacific line, like the regular one out of Sweetwater County that originates in Rock Springs and moves through Rawlins and Creston Junction on its way to Laramie. Some of the fans are so filled with spirit by the time the train reaches its destination that they are unable to get off. "There are those," says one Rock Springs regular, "who haven't seen a game in seven years."

One might interpret this as proof that it has been easier to love the Cowboys than watch them in recent seasons. One might further assume that a team that has now won five out of six games and leads the race to the Fiesta Bowl should certainly draw more than the 23,649 who saw the New Mexico game, which featured the WAC co-leaders. But that would beg the fact that in all of Wy-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER REACMILLER



oming's 97,914 square miles there are only 350,000 people. Which means that by season's end the total attendance in Laramie will represent almost a third of the total population, a per capita support that, were such records kept, would surely be hard to beat.

Moreover, Wyoming fans are hardly what you would call fair-weather friends. The Cowboy Joes, a statewide support group, started a fund-raising drive last year—when the team was 2-9—that has enriched the athletic program by a remarkable \$250,000. No team in the WAC derives so much from so few. The school itself is the smallest in the league. And so is its stadium, although there are those who now believe that Akers is only a legislative session away from the \$24 million appropriation he has been pumping in order to dome over Memorial Stadium and, thereby, to allow the Cowboys to play home games in November. Because southern schools in the WAC are squeamish about such things as chill factors and snow accumulation, Wyoming always has to play its last four or five games on the road. The disadvantages are obvious.

Wyoming's success in earlier years was paid for with the muscle of a rather col-

orful group of emigres, for some of whom the term "tramp athlete" would be high praise and on whose heads the Laramie police force was sure to raise lumps a few times a year. Bob Devaney's coaching stint (1957-61) began to change that, and Lloyd Eaton raised the standards even higher and took the team to its only major bowl game (the Sugar Bowl in 1968). Eaton was recognized for his strong principles and iron discipline, neither of which saved him when, before the game with Brigham Young in October of 1969, 14 black players on the team decided to protest the racial policies of the Mormon Church. Eaton said no protest. The players insisted. Eaton kicked them off the team.

The impasse, in retrospect, had predictable consequences: the "Black 14" as they came to be known (and are still referred to in Wyoming) were not reinstated. Eaton's decimated team, after three straight WAC championships, lost its last four games that year, and then plummeted to 1-9 in 1970. Eaton resigned. The Mormon Church remained unreformed. Said a Latter-day Saint at the time, "We are not a Greyhound bus or a Woolworth five-and-dime."

It is accurate but not entirely appro-



After seven years there's a lot to cheer about

petate to point out that the Cowboys, seven years later, once again have black players. And that some of them are stars. And that this is why Wyoming is winning. The syllogism breaks down when it is recalled that the coaching staffs after Eaton recruited blacks, too. The team had a high of 23 black players two seasons ago. But black or white, Wyoming was no longer getting quality players.

Furthermore, coaches were reluctant to coach. Team discipline went to pot. "Two-Fifty Night" at the Buckhorn, a Laramie hangout where a fellow could quaff all the beer he wanted on a Wednesday for \$2.50, drew a swarm of football players. "Before Coach Akers and his staff took over, we were the Buckhorn's best customers," says McClain. "I'd see the seniors going and I'd say, 'What the heck, I'm not playing, I'll go, too.' You'd have a hard time finding a player at the Buckhorn during the season now."

You would have a hard time finding a Wyoming player doing anything out of line these days. Akers trained under Darrell Royal. Though a boyishly handsome, slightly built man of 37, with eyes so perfectly round and blue that he appears perpetually surprised, Akers effected a remarkable return to discipline. McClain says even the off-season training routine

continued

New Mexico was beaten on a blocked punt that Cowboy Dennis Gentry (23) fell on in the end zone.



was unsurpassed in its effectiveness—"I came back weighing 230 pounds, and worked down to 180. It was murder."

Akers also renewed the emphasis on quality recruiting. Twenty-five of the 30 players he recruited last year had grade averages of 3.0 or better. But he did not subscribe entirely to what Eaton used to call the snow-belt approach—following an imaginary line from coast to coast and only choosing players above the line who could be expected to acclimate to Wyoming's drastic weather patterns. Akers' starting center, and now a team co-captain, Ray Davies, is from Tampa. Once he got used to Laramie, Davies wouldn't go home for vacations. He says Tampa is "too hot." Wyoming has always had to recruit outside (there are but 64 high schools in the state, and only 14 of those play football at the top level), but Akers set up new pipelines—to Birmingham to get Split End Ken Lett, to Nederland, Texas, to get Quarterback Don Clayton.

This is not to say that Wyoming no longer appreciates the kind of frontier ruggedness that drives the young men of Laramie to flaunt their toughness by wearing T-shirts on subfreezing days, or to take friendly pokes at offending noses at the Cowboy Bar on a Friday night. Defensive Tackle Mike Webb had 75 stitches in a face-lifting he suffered from a brawler with a broken glass pitcher in Colorado. He was subsequently recruited by Wyoming and has started off and on for two years.

And then there is Linebacker Paul Nunu. A senior, Nunu was recruited by

the previous Wyoming staff, but only in the figurative sense. Nunu asked to come to Wyoming, looking for "something different." Something different is what Nunu certainly is—a Samoan by way of Laie, Hawaii, who got into so many fights as a boy that a school official suggested he might be safer playing football. Nunu did not know what football was. When he saw it for the first time, he thought it was "crazy." But he learned to appreciate the finer points—"I'd rather whip the guy in front of me than get a press clipping any day. Especially when the guy's bigger."

It was one exquisitely aggressive play by Nunu that turned last Saturday's game around. Since Arizona State's recent spectacular descent, the contest matched the two best teams in the WAC, and for a half the highly charged New Mexico offense moved at will through a rather demure Cowboy defense. Except for a tendency to self-destruct—penalties and fumbles (one recovered by Nunu), stunted their drives—the Lobos would probably have had a safer halftime lead than 14-10. They had to punt only once in the first half.

Then on third down of its first possession of the third quarter, New Mexico tried an end-around play from its 22-yard line. The ball, the end and Nunu arrived almost simultaneously at the 15. With one massive stroke, Nunu stripped the ball clean from the end and smothered it at the New Mexico nine. Sophomore Quarterback Marc Cousins got the touchdown in three plays, putting Wy-

oming ahead for the first time at 17-14.

Inspired by the defense's new vigor Cousins came right back with a crisp 68-yard drive that included three runs of his own for 23 yards and a 42-yard pass play, but then lost the momentum by fumbling a fourth-down snap at the New Mexico goal. Wyoming's defense held and blocked the subsequent Lobo punt in the end zone for what proved the necessary touchdown. New Mexico fought down the field as the fourth quarter began, but again the Cowboy defense held and the Lobos had to settle for a 19-yard field goal. New Mexico renewed the pressure, scoring a touchdown with a little more than a minute to play, but Wyoming Linebackers Glen Hover and Grant Linck and Defensive End Dave Clements put the crunch on New Mexico Quarterback Noel Mazonne on a try for a two-point conversion, and that was the game. By then the two teams had run up all but the dribbles of the game's 851 total yards—506 by New Mexico—in as practical a demonstration of the WAC's reputation as a "big-play conference" as you would ever want to expose your nerves to.

Wyoming won because it is remarkably poised for such a young team. It did not lose a fumble, it did not throw an interception in all that frenzied play. And because, as Akers had said the day before the game, it is a team "you'd have to kill a half-inch at a time to beat."

Akers offers his wandering brigades of Cowboy fans a more open, perhaps even more sophisticated version of the wishbone than Royal uses at Texas. The Cowboys pass more than a typical wishbone team—13 times against New Mexico, but 18 to 20 times in most games—and make better use of split backfields. But if you were to try to pin the whole thing down—how after such poverty the Cowboys are suddenly the class of the WAC—you would probably come to the same conclusion as a growing number of coaches who see these dramatic turnabouts in college football as the simple arithmetical sum of three years in the jaws of the NCAA's 30-scholarship limit.

Almost overnight, Arizona State has become a WAC also-ran, and Arizona, the school that is pushing for them both to jump to the Pac 8, is not much more attractive as a candidate for exaltation. It is reasonable to say that both should now be dubious of such a move. Life among the Eskimos is tough enough.

Fans ride into Laramie from as far as the eye can see and beyond the finger ridges of the Rockies



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PRO BASKETBALL 1976-77

A SEASON FOR ALL MEN

by CURRY KIRKPATRICK

Merger provides a test every partisan will enjoy; the tough old NBA types against the ABA survivors. As tipoff neared, the only problem was a big one—the Dooler

Mel Daniels was out on his Indiana ranch breaking some colts when he heard the news. Freddie Lewis was sitting in his living room in Indianapolis. Down in North Carolina, Byron Beck and Lou Dampier were practicing for an exhibition game against the U.S. Olympic team. Beck let out a whoop and threw the basketball the length of the floor; Dampier sat down on a bench and shook his head.

All their trials, Lord, soon be over.

As pro basketball enters its first consolidated, expandable, assimilated, mergerama year, these four NBA players are all that remain of the original ABA. Oh, there are a couple of old Oakland Oaks hanging around coaching. A few red, white and blue 30-second clocks. One solitary three-point circle (in Indianapolis' Market Square Arena—you couldn't get it off with a nuclear attack). But everything else is gone.

No more Blutch Booker and Brian Brunkhorst and Willie Somerset having his false teeth stolen from the locker room. No more Irv Inniger and Elvin Ivory and Helicopter Hentz shattering two glass backboards in one game. No more

Leary Lentz and Lonnie Klutz and Les Selva—bless his heart—throwing up 26 three-point prayers in a single night. No more Maribert Pradd.

Though the merger or the absorption or the surrender or whatever one wishes to call it does not affect the Dave Cowens and Rick Barrys and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in the same way it does ABA people ("All it means is two more trips to New York to see the folks," says Abdul-Jabbar), the new 22-team league is a welcome conclusion to most of the game's thorny problems.

What is important now is that the New York Nets, or somebody, guarantee us a look into the future by coming to terms with the best player on earth, Julius Erving. For probably it is the wondrous Dr. J, more than any greenbacked lawsuit, who brought about the holy consummation.

When Erving decided to hold out for a renegotiation of his \$230,000-plus annual salary during the preseason, not everyone considered him all that wondrous anymore. Yet as soon as veteran NBA supporters witness a couple of the Doctor's basic impossible, incredible, unbe-

lievable sky-jams, who will deny him a sultan's ransom? Last week Erving and Nets President Roy Boe continued to cross swords over Fort Knox while 14 CBS-TV executives fingered the panic buttons. This Friday night the network begins its expanded 54-game regular-season coverage with the Nets at Golden State; CBS has scheduled Erving's Nets no less than 12 times during an 18-week period.

That should satisfy those ticket-buyers who gobbled up every seat in sight for Erving's debuts around the NBA, especially one J. Smiley of Detroit. On the



day merger was announced Mr. Smiley appeared at Cobo Arena, whipped out his \$200 Ford Motor Company payroll check and mumbled something like, "Gimme all you got for the Doctah."

While the Nets as well as all basketball need their physician, the Knicks among other teams may require a mortician. Intradivisional play counts for little this season, with everybody playing everybody else four times at most. "You won't have control of your own destiny any more; they've taken out the divisional meaning," says Boston Coach Tom Heinsohn.

Ah, but. "We won't have to worry about playing Portland and Seattle six or seven times anymore," says Golden State's Barry. "We get bored seeing each other so often."

The ABA graduates will only occasionally be boring, but they may be in for some hard rain during the early competition. "We have to prove ourselves," says Indiana's Darnell Hillman, "and they [the NBA regulars] are gonna make us prove ourselves."

Chicago's 7' 2" Artis Gilmore arrived in the Windy City from Kentucky to the herald of trumpets only to be "carded"

(asked for his ID) in the Bombay Bicycle Club, a local watering hole. After that Gilmore was rudely barred around in exhibition games, once taking an opposition hook shot full in the face. "I am not Muhammad Ali," said the gentle newcomer, "but I refuse to take such unprofessional cheap shots."

ABA philosophies certain to show up in the merger include a concentration on the running game, quick guard play with a lot of shooting from backcourt and less physical but more all-court defense. Whether old NBA hands believe it or not, ABA teams stressed perimeter barricades (to discourage the three-pointer) and left the inside lanes unclogged. Surely this is a condition to look for, not to mention hope for, in the realigned league. Moreover, despite the NBA's reputation for rougher stuff, ABA teams found pre-season referees' calls much closer than they were accustomed to.

Denver committed 79 fouls in its first two exhibition games. Seattle shot 69 free throws against the Nets. An exchange between the Nuggets' David Thompson and Referee Richie Powers after a blocking call on Thompson may have been a preview of things to come.

Thompson: "I was there all day."

Powers: "I don't miss many, kid, but you know I'll be right."

In this new/old-look season, a man wouldn't be far from right to choose as division winners three old—Boston, Cleveland and Golden State—and one new—Denver. The Nuggets are smart, quick and deep. Their experience in the unique "passing game" offense as well as their pressing, trapping defenses make Denver an especially difficult team to prepare for.

L.A. Coach Jerry West, who steps in to lead the Lakers, says, "Denver has the kind of team everybody wants. They could win it all, they're that good."

The Nuggets sold an astounding 10,000 season tickets, after which their gifted flying boy, Thompson, proceeded to a) block a Bill Walton dunk shot in Denver, b) shatter a backboard in Portland, and c) put on a spine-tingling high-wire demonstration in Oakland. "The man never drove on me before," said Golden State's Jamaal Wilkes. "He

continued



ERVING'S ALL-ROUND WIZARDRY MADE HIM THE BIGGEST CHIP IN THE MERGER POT

"THE BEST AGAINST THE BEST"

Representatives of the NBA and ABA met over lunch in New York one day last week to discuss such weighty matters as slam dunks and elbows. Dave Cowens ordered grilled cheese and a beer. Julius Erving chose the club sandwich with soda pop. This is part of what they said.

Cowens: You must know you're a marked man in this league, Doc.

Erving: By now I'm a marked man on my own team.

C: You embarrassed a lot of people by jamming on 'em. Nobody likes to be guarding a guy when the guy puts on some outrageous move and slams the ball through the floor and the crowd goes nuts. People are keying on you, like O. J. Simpson.

E: I expect that.

C: Everybody who asks me about the ABA says can I handle the Doctor? I say, well, I imagine so. I've been around six years and handled a lot of people and, by the way, the Doctor plays forward and I play center.

E: I get the same thing. "How you gonna get Dave? What you gonna do to put on Kareem?" Hey, when did I start playing the middle? The questions are ridiculous.

C: Wait till you hear the crowd in Cleveland. You talk about noise. Twenty thousand start screaming from the time you do layups to the end. I firmly believe if a guy played there every night, he'd lose his hearing.

E: I never played in front of that many before. People talk about ABA teams sneaking up on the NBA. I think we're beyond that stage. Everybody knows Denver will be tough. But there are some players the public never heard of who can really do it. Billy Knight of Indiana is a super player.

C: Billy Knight? I thought he retired.

E: You're serious, aren't you? Geez. You'll be surprised.

C: Well, I have trouble remembering guys in my own league.

E: At least Knight's a forward, not a center. You probably know Silas and Gervin, right? Gervin will shock people more than anybody else coming in.

C: Silas James Silas? I don't know Gervin. I'm not even a fan. I don't even know what team he plays for.

E: Take a guess.

C: San Antonio? Look, you have to realize my attitude. When I came in as a rookie, here I went against Chamberlain, Jabbar, Lanier. I never played them before. Was I gonna be amazed and awed or was I gonna make them respect me? I have to play against somebody before I can judge how good they are. Except for what you may do, I won't be surprised by anybody.

E: I think Gervin will surprise you.

C: There are a couple of tough customers waiting for you, Julius. Paul Silas denies the ball and pushes people around. Phil Jackson

of the Knicks muscles you and elbows you and keeps you away. Leonard Grey out at Seattle knocks hell out of everybody. A powerful dude.

E: What about Golden State? Phoenix? Cleveland?

C: Now, you won't have any problem with anybody at Golden State. I'm talking forwards now. Phoenix—nothin'. Cleveland's got Brewer. Washington's got Truck Robinson. What you'll do is clear out the side and drive right past them. Easy. You're asking the wrong guy about who's physical. Nobody's more physical than me.

E: Hey, were you impressed with McGinnis?

C: Offensively, I was. He didn't use his body as much as he could. As far as rebounding, defense—no. He doesn't screen off at all. He made All-Pro. But a lot of people didn't think he should have. Say, what about depth? Do you think the ABA teams are as deep as ours?

E: No, I never felt parity there. We're still not deep at center.

C: Each team will get deeper from now on. Everybody will have to use eight men rather than six.

E: Intelligence will be more of a factor. Players who play with their heads will have it all over the raw-skill guys.

C: The league is nowhere near as physically tough as it was. You used to get punched in the crotch, slugged in the mouth. Go up for a jumper and get kicked. We still got our cheap-shot artists but most of those fellas are gone now. The game is more finesse than ever.

E: I know Denver is concerned about people trying to intimidate them.

C: You always try to intimidate. It's part of the game. But intimidation doesn't come from a fist in the face. It comes from screening and blocking and putting on constant pressure.

E: Some guys quit and some don't. There're only about five NBA teams that are physical. I think the Nets will be physical.

C: Doc, do you feel an extra challenge this year?

E: I guess so but I don't think about it. I feel 100%. I know what will happen.

C: Well, I'm glad about the merger. I look around and see a bunch of guys who shouldn't be playing in this league. Year after year they don't improve. Just pick up the checks. It's no motivation to play against these dogs. Now the best in the world are in one league. The best against the best at their best.

E: That's it. Really. I always boosted the ABA and promoted it and got the exposure. People know me. But the merger means more to our guys collectively. The ABA was part of my life, and I don't think it will ever be erased from memory. But this is so long overdue. It's a great, great feeling.

PRO BASKETBALL *continued*

never posted either. Yes, it was a surprise. What a talent. He bent me bad all night."

The Celtics' Heinsohn says of Denver's other forward, Bobby Jones: "Everybody talks about Erving, but Bobby Jones is a player's player. Right now he's as good as anybody in the league."

To a man, ABA personnel on both old and new teams are ready to show their wares. Outspoken Marvin Barnes of Detroit (né St. Louis) had a characteristically volatile September during which he interrupted his first appearance as a Piston by requesting permission to leave the bench and go to the bathroom. "I'm not the most stable guy, but I'm one of the world's greatest forwards," says Bad Marvin, not without accuracy. San Antonio's Larry Kenon, another brash young cornerman, sums up the general feeling of the old league when he says, "The good teams are still going to win the most games. It just so happens some of the ABA teams are the good ones."

As New York thrills to the yoyo heroics of Dr. J and Tiny A (Nate Archibald); as San Antonio roars out for notoriety with the pros' most raucous spectators, as Indiana contributes the game's finest unknown player in Billy Knight, who could wind up leading the league in scoring; Denver may be challenging for the NBA title.

But back to the Man Man. Always back to Erving. The Doctor. "I remember this guy," says Abdul-Jabbar, beakening back to his teenage days. "One summer all of a sudden there was Julius Erving. Rite Park, up the Rockaway Peninsula. This skinny, bony kid. He didn't handle the ball much. Just rebounded. We measured hands once. His were bigger. He played up front, one-handed everything and stuffed over everybody."

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Julius Erving finally together again in the same league. Can you dig it? Throw up the ball. The Doctor is in.

FACE TO FACE

WHO REALLY IS SUPERIOR—THE ABA'S TOP CENTER, ARTIS GILMORE, NOW WITH THE BULLS, OR THE LAKERS' TOWERING KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES. ALLAN MARDON PANTS FIVE OF THE SEASON'S INTRIGUING NEW FACEOFFS





IN THE BACKCOURT: CELTICS' JO JO WHITE
AND EX-ABA-ER RON BOONE OF THE KINGS



UP FRONT: DAVID THOMPSON OF DENVER
LEAPS AGAINST BOSTON'S SIDNEY WICKS



MUSCLE IN THE CORNERS: BULLET ELVIN
HAYES VS. MARVIN BARNES OF THE PISTONS



YOUNGER, FASTER, SLICKER

The NBA's last commissioner, who starred in the NBA himself, says his players have some qualities the older league's do not
by DAVE DEBUSSCHERE

Economic imperatives may have brought it about, but the pro basketball merger makes just as much sense on the court as it does in the ledger books. I expect the four absorbed ABA teams—Denver, the New York Nets, San Antonio and Indiana—to fit into the NBA very nicely, just as Artis Gilmore, Mack Calvin and others from the three disbanded ABA franchises will fit in on an individual basis. Actually, the ex-ABAers will more than merely fit in; they will add some quickness and excitement the older league needs.

It will be different for the newcomers—and not just because of the obvious things. No more three-point play? I happen to think the ABA's three-point rule forced defenses to be more honest and often enlivened the game's closing minutes, and I hope it will be adopted eventually by the NBA. But abandoning it won't make any decisive difference. The red-white-and-blue ball is gone, too, but probably few people realize that the significant difference between the NBA and ABA balls was not their color but in the way they were made. Like the ball used in college, the ABA ball had a slicker surface and was a little harder to handle, especially with sweaty hands. The NBA ball has deeper seams, and most ABA transplants find it easier to get a grip on—and easier to shoot.

The former ABAers will have to ad-

just to all those big unfamiliar arenas (a new one every night, for a while) filled with skeptical, even hostile, NBA die-hards. But they will play better before an audience of 12,000 in Portland than they did for some of those crowds of 1,800 we had last season in St. Louis. And every one of the ex-ABA players will be going all out to prove they belong in the NBA. When I was traded to the Knicks in 1968, I desperately wanted to show the Pistons they were wrong in getting rid of me. The ex-ABA players are now going to get the same lift. And they may have a little edge by being generally unknown. While ABA players are familiar with John Havlicek or Rick Barry from TV and by reputation, the NBA's premier awareness of the ABA pretty much began and ended with Dr. J and David Thompson.

What will affect the ABA players most is having to adjust to a different style of play. The NBA has always played a physical game, with pattern offenses designed to work the ball into the low post and defenses that try to create traffic jams in the middle. The ABA, by contrast, relied on speed and finesse. The NBA could play that way because it had a virtual monopoly on big, dominating centers; but the league was more physical at other positions, too. The ABA tended toward smaller backcourt men, while the classic NBA guards—the Robertsons, the Wests and the Fraziers—were around 6' 4" and strong inside. The difference was also true at forward, where most of the ABA stars—Erving, Thompson, George Gervin and Billy Knight—were to be found. Unlike the Paul Silas-type bruisers who abound in the NBA, these were mostly less physical players whose strong suits were mobility and ball handling.

The distinctions will be magnified by the fact that the ABA's two most formidable centers—Artis Gilmore and Caldwell Jones—have wound up with established NBA clubs, Chicago and Philadelphia. The others, e.g., the Spurs' Paulie Pavlitz and Denver's Dan Issel, will now face not only Gilmore and Jones again but, night after night, a succession of tough, big men—Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Bill Walton and Bob Lanier. On offense, where ABA players once went to the hoop without hesitation, the presence of shot blockers like Abdul-Jabbar, Cliff-



ford Ray and Elvin Hayes will impress upon them the wisdom of pulling up for 12-foot jumpers.

The adjustment ABA players must make extends also to officiating. While ABA referees allowed looser play, even if it meant winking at occasional traveling violations, things will be different in the NBA, which allows freer use of hands inside.

The problem for the former ABA teams will be to get the ball upcourt ahead of all of those long arms and sharp elbows they will encounter. To do this they must first get the rebounds. Erving, Gervin, Thompson, Indiana's Darnell Hillman and Denver's Bobby Jones are all leapers, but they must avoid getting themselves ground down under the backboards.

I think the Nets, Nuggets, Pacers and Spurs will win their share of games even though the terms of the merger stacked the deck against them: the established NBA clubs had access to the college draft, while the four ABA teams did not. But it will all even out, I predict a banner year for pro basketball, maybe the best ever. But don't bother calling me for one of those ABA basketballs as a keepsake. Souvenir hunters snapped them all up months ago.

SMOOTH FORWARDS: BOBBY JONES OF DENVER AND RICK BARRY OF GOLDEN STATE

SCOUTING REPORTS BY CURRY KIRKPATRICK, PAT PUTNAM AND JOHN PAPANEEK BEGIN ON NEXT PAGE



ATLANTIC DIVISION

The Atlantic Division is the only division in pro anything to feature, simultaneously, two defending world champions. Interesting—an accident of history that won't happen again. Unhappily for the Celtics and the Nets, no championship of any kind—not even one—is likely to come their way again this year. Too bad, Dave. Tough luck, Doctor. The problem is Philadelphia.

The 76ers have the kind of team that keeps general managers off Gelusil: five good guards? Four good forwards? Three centers? The joy of it was always Coach Gene Shue's smile every day, and when asked about things he says, "Fan-tastic!" Actually, all he will concede publicly is that this team is better than the one he inherited three years ago. Then his word was "Fabulous." Shue never has been known to be pessimistic.

Last year Philadelphia was blessed by the arrival of George McGinnis. This time the newcomer is Caldwell Jones, the 7' 1" ABA survivor who was headed from St. Louis to the 76ers eventually anyway but has now arrived a year earlier than expected. There are ABA coaches who will tell you that Jones was the best center in the league—some nights.

"I don't put none of these NBA guys on pedestals," Jones says. "I'm motivated." If he isn't, he can listen for the footsteps of two-year veteran Harvey Catchings, the league's fourth-best shotblocker, and 19-year-old Darryl Dawkins, whose strength from a massive 6' 11½", 245-pound frame has been compared, if somewhat optimistically, to Wilt Chamberlain's.

The strength of Jones, particularly in the low post, will afford McGinnis a chance to operate near the basket, where he is close to unstoppable. The other cornerman is burly Steve Mix, who can run, score, rebound and intimidate. Billy Cunningham, at 33, tried gamely but failed to come back from a devastating knee injury. Backup strength is there: 6' 10" Joe Bryant, rookie Terry Furlow and ex-Virginia Squire Mel Bennett.

The backcourt is young and experienced, a rare combination. The old man, Fred Carter, is 31 with seven NBA years behind him and, apparently, a new attitude. Doug Collins, despite his new Little Orphan Annie hairstyle, is one of the best running guards around; and there is quick Henry Bibby, ex-New York, ex-New Orleans.

The Celtics approached the new season like bears coming out of hibernation, still feeling the strain of winning last year's NBA final over Phoenix. But when their General Manager Red Auerbach thumbed his nose at the Celtic "family" tradition and treated John Havlicek and Paul Silas like a couple of ingrates during contract negotiations, they became ill-tempered. Growled one Celtic, "John could have taken a million four years ago and gone to the ABA." Said another, of Silas, "All he did was win us two championships in three years."

Then, with Hondo signed but Silas still out, Auerbach landed 6' 9" Sidney Wicks, the All-Star forward-center from Portland, and the Celtics felt better. Wicks had bounced from Portland to New Orleans and back again, refusing to sign because he wanted "to play with a winner like Los Angeles." Los Angeles?

Now Wicks could have his winner. Boston starts Silas, Havlicek and Dave Cowens up front, Jo Jo White and Charlie Scott in the backcourt, the same five that played nearly every minute of last year's championship series. Wicks comes in, joining Silas and Cowens on a front line that could move out the Minnesota

Vikings, and Havlicek moves to guard, where he preserves his precious legs, and allows Scott to sit down before his ninth personal foul. Then Cowens sits down and luxuriates while Wicks, the best backup he's ever had, moves to center.

The only questions are whether Silas will do his part by signing and how far Boston can go with six players, even six this good. Steve Kuberski can play some forward, but Glenn McDonald, at times brilliant, is mostly inconsistent. In the backcourt the problem is thorny even with Havlicek putting in more time. Kevin Stacom has tried to help for three years, but the Celtics haven't had a good off-the-bench guard since they traded Paul Westphal.

"The Knicks will be back by hook or by crook," So prophesied one NBA general manager. The crook method cost them a first-round draft choice (for trying to steal McGinnis last year), and so far the hook has only caught them a small forward, not the big center they need. Buffalo sold them Forward Jim McMillan, a quintessential Red Holzman player who is an updated version of Bill Bradley: smart, quick, good defense, and he'll hit a million in a row from the corner. The backcourt will be no problem if Walt Frazier, Earl Monroe and Butch Beard stay healthy. Frazier had an abysmal year, missing 23 games with one malady or another, prompting some to suggest that Clyde was shot. "Maybe I am," he said in straightface. "I'm cillid. I'm tired." Monroe, who simply gets better as he gets older, just laughed. "This year we make the playoffs. I can assure you." Not without a center, though. Well, the Knicks think they have found the new Willis Reed. At 6' 8", 240, rookie Lonnie Shelton of Oregon State looks enough like the old captain. The question is, can he play like him? And if so, when? Until Shelton proves himself, Holzman is determined to convert 6' 8" Spencer Haywood to the center position he has always abhorred. Which means that Haywood must take a crash course in passing, picking and boarding, skills heretofore absent from his repertoire, and Holzman must come up with another forward. Phil Jackson and Bradley are now strictly backups. If Haywood doesn't work out and Shelton is no miracle man, Eddie Donovan will be back at the telephone—mostly calling dial-a-prayer.

Since the Knicks have McMillan, Buf-

falo doesn't, and now that the Braves' last link to calm and steady basketball is gone, watch out. Coach Jack Ramsay was sent on his way by peripatetic Owner Paul Snyder—basketball's answer to Charlie Finley—who also got rid of Guards Ken Charles and Bobby Weiss and swingman Dick Gibbs. In June, Snyder nearly had the Braves moved to Hollywood, Fla., and in July sold half the team to John Y. Brown, the former owner of the Kentucky Colonels—and the ABA's answer to Paul Snyder.

When the smoke cleared, new Coach Tates Locke looked out and saw what he had: three prolific point producers, a big forward and a pudgy guard. Not much more. Forward Bob McAdoo and Guard Randy Smith combined for 53 points a game last year. This year, without McMillian, they could hit 60. McMillian was unloaded to make room for 6' 5" rookie Forward Adrian Dantley, who averaged 30 points the last two seasons at Notre Dame. Switching with McAdoo between the pivot and the corner is big (6' 9") Forward John Shumate, a second-year man and Dantley's old Irish teammate Shu-

mate was sensational in the playoffs after arriving in midseason. Locke will use Shumate defensively against the big centers—as much as anything to keep McAdoo out of foul trouble. Ernie DiGregorio is back as a starting guard, but Locke does not like his defense and erratic offense, and will look closely at the whippet, former Colonel Bird Averitt, and Claude Terry from Denver.

If the merger was a sugarplum for the three other ex-ABA teams, it turned out to be a poisoned apple for the Nets, who just four months ago were sipping champagne. Since then Owner Roy Boe has been like a man sinking in quicksand. Even before Julius Erving realized he was the single most valuable commodity in the new NBA and decided to make Boe pay, money problems forced him to deal off three players who had a hand in the championship. The best defensive guard, Brian Taylor, and Jim Eakins, the strong backup center, went to Kansas City for the colorful Tiny Archibald. Ted McClain, the next best defensive guard, was sent to Denver. Boe said he had made the deal with Nugget President Carl

Scheer in return for Scheer's promise to help ease the Nets' \$4 million indemnity owed the Knicks. The preseason without Erving was difficult: in the backcourt Archibald was operating without the Nets' singular offensive weapon to get the ball to; John Williamson seemed uneasy without the ball; and Al Skinner was not reacting well to the pressure of being the team's top defensive guard. Up front in Erving's spot, Jan van Breda Kolff, a skinny defensive forward from Kentucky, did not seem to fit opposite either Rich Jones or Tim Bessent. Kim Hughes, who can play, was sharing center with ex-Muskie-Pacer-Sound-Claw Mel Daniels, who used to play. At one point the Nets were carrying six centers.

"Adjusting," says Williamson. "We'll be doing that for a while. Adjusting to Tiny. Adjusting when the Doc gets back." With or without Erving, there are two things to be said about the Nets. They would not be the first team to finish last after winning a title. The Syracuse Nats did that in 1956. And Roy Boe may have himself the most colorful last-place team in basketball.

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GONE TO OUR HEADS?
SEE, TANK, ARE PEOPLE
SAYING THAT?



**PACIFIC
DIVISION**

The vision of Golden State blowing its shot at the title persists. One can still see Rick Barry standing around, hands on hips, pouting; Phil Smith slightly confused and shot-happy; Al Attles momentarily dazed and forgetting his bench; the best basketball team in the universe falling apart like a house of cards on that fateful May day in Oakland. A remarkable scene. Nothing should be allowed to diminish the tenacious Phoenix Suns; they put the defending champion Golden State Warriors on the spot in their battle for the Western Conference title. But the fact is the Warriors committed a horrible act of self-immolation. "We weren't ready for the Suns—we went out the window," says Barry. "I guess people learn things the hard way, and that's about as hard a way as I've ever known."

Following the on-court demise, the Warrior front office also fell apart when the general-management team of Dick Vertlieb and Hal Childs departed for the Seattle baseball franchise and the much admired director of player personnel, Bob Feerick, died. Attles, who took over

the duties of general manager as well as coach, says that players consider the front office "just a place to get money and mail." But it is more than that, and Vertlieb was a master of detail, wise in the art of simultaneously soothing feelings and kicking tails; Golden State's famous organizational togetherness was always the keystone to success.

What these developments will mean to a team that won 59 games, led the league's toughest division by 16, scored more points than anybody, boasted the best point-spread margin (by a ton) and thus thoroughly dominated the regular season is anybody's guess. Yet Golden State returns with a pat hand, not to mention the big feet of 7-foot rookie Robert Parish, from small and (last season) NCAA-blacklisted Centenary College. Veteran Center Clifford Ray quickly ended his holdout after a couple of startling offensive board performances by Parish in the preseason. This tandem joins rejector George Johnson to give the Warriors depth in the middle. Opponents still will have to cope with Barry and the smooth Jamaal Wilkes in the

continued

corners, Smith and the rapid-firing Charles Johnson in backcourt, as well as the best bench in the pros led by Charles Dudley.

Atiles ignored his double-D musculen, Dwight Davis and Derrick Dickey, in the playoff crises, and he says he cut down on the playing time of the sometimes brilliant Gus Williams to protect him from fans intolerant of rookie inconsistency. Williams played well during the preseason, so his fragile psyche seems to have been strengthened.

If the Warriors are to restore their championship aspirations, they will do so over the tanned and talented bodies from Phoenix. As all midnight special watchers know, the Suns went on from their upset victory in the West to near immortality in the East with the Heard shot round the world. That was the basket Garfield Heard made (at the end of, what was it, the 12th overtime?) against the Celtics in the most recent of the Greatest Playoff Games in History.

At one time last season, before the apocalypse, Phoenix went 4-18 and scored eight points in one quarter of a game. The Suns finished last in NBA rebounding. But they finished as the darlings of the Sunbelt and sold 5,000 season tickets in a community that usually refuses to watch until the thermometer dips below 110°, say about February.

Coach John MacLeod was masterful in parlaying the skills of rookies Alvan Adams and Ricky Sobers, newcomers Paul Westphal and Heard, and erstwhile volleyball king Keith Erickson into a crew that took absolute control of its home court, winning 19 in a row at the Coliseum. Any team that does that has a chance to win the championship.

Phoenix has strengthened itself just where it was needed, in depth and backcourt quickness, with the addition of smart swingman Tom Van Arsdale from Atlanta and perpetual-motion Ron Lee from Oregon, who was also drafted by San Diego of the NFL and by pro soccer's Portland Timbers. Lee's non-stop, manic aggression and infectious enthusiasm have earned him the nickname Taz (for Tasmanian devil). He could be a starter by mid-season and Phoenix' second straight Rookie of the Year—after Adams. At which point the populace should have figured out which Van Arsdale is which. For the first time as pros, twins Tom and Dick are together. "I

can already call them by name when they enter the room," says Westphal. "I say 'Hi, Van.'"

There was a time last winter when Portland won seven straight games in which the Mountain Man, Bill Walton, played like the best center in the division, which is to say the best center in the world. The Trail Blazers even beat Golden State on the road in a game in which Geoff Petrie had 30 points and Sidney Wicks 15 turnovers. It was a watershed of the Portland paradox.

The Blazers went on to lead the league in injuries. Walton went on to miss 29 games with assorted ills, and Petrie and Wicks simply went on. These discordant personalities were finally traded away. New Coach Jack Ramsay drafted the ABA enforcer, Maurice Lucas, late of St. Louis, to replace Wicks. He gathered some versatile backcourt men—shooter Herm Gilliam from Atlanta, defender Dave Twardzik of Virginia in the ABA and speedy rookie Johnny Davis from Dayton—to replace Petrie. He designated lefty Lionel Hollins to direct the fast break and swingman Larry Steele to operate a tight, clawing upcourt defense. And Ramsay prays for the preservation of Walton's health.

Rid of his ponytail, Walton now is into things like grand-marching neighborhood parades. He still has a pin in his twice-broken wrist, which hurts him on rebounds, but he had a marvelous pre-season and seems eager to take his rightful place among the guns of the game. "The atmosphere is so good now," he said after the Blazers' first exhibition, in which he outplayed and wore down Kareem Abdul-Jabbar enough so that Lucas could make a game-winning jam over the Luker center. Portland's first draft pick, Wally Walker from the University of Virginia, should help in time. But the Wunderkind, Moses Malone, also picked up in the ABA dispersal draft, is still light-years and thorny attitudes away, and dependable Center-Forward Lloyd Neal is out for two months with a torn knee, which means the Trail Blazers' potentially fast start may not be quite so blazing after all.

Then there is Seattle, where Captain Telephone. Bill Russell, has a tall man (7' 4" Tom Burleson), a strong man (Leonard Gray), a bald man (Slick Wats) and an artillery man (Downtown Freddie Brown) but no leading man. That is,

nobody to go to for direction in the tight spots. "I'm a shooter, not a leader," says Brown.

Last season, with Burleson maturing into a fearsome center, with Wats leading the league in steals and assists—"It takes more guts to go for assists," says the Slicker—and with Brown throwing them up from the Space Needle, Russell's ragtag legions staggered into the playoffs, where Gray's absence because of knee surgery was a harsh blow.

Russell brought his usual 8,000 substitute types into preseason camp and emerged with two genuinely tough backcourt defenders in Dennis Johnson from Pepperdine and Bob Wilkerson from Indiana. The 6' 7" Wilkerson could be a star soon enough, but the Sonics desperately need help in the corners where Bruce Seals, Talvin Skinner, Willie Norwood and former ABA Center Mike Green (ex-Virginia) can't guard anything but their paychecks.

If Seattle's forwards are bad, you should see the registrars at the Los Angeles Kennel Club. It was a tribute to the abilities of the wondrous Abdul-Jabbar (an easy MVP winner what with leading the league in rebounds, blocked shots, minutes played and being second in scoring) that the Lakers won 40 games to finish in fourth place. They may not do as well this time. Second-year man Don Ford fits the plans of new Coach Jerry West (yes, that Jerry West) and rookie Earl Tatum from Marquette may be a sleeper. But for assistance Abdul-Jabbar must look to his guard mates.

Old Celtic Don Chaney lends defense. Former Virginia Square star Mack Calvin contributes ball handling and penetration. Renegade Lucius Allen can lead a fast break. But there is little help otherwise. The Lakers are woefully slow and uninitiated, forcing West to employ set offenses and a helping team defense rather than the running, mano-a-mano game for which he was so famous. After a day of practice West contracted tonsillitis and a fever of 102°, and Abdul-Jabbar said, "Look, one day and he's already sick of us." Everybody laughed. Hoo. Hoo. But unless Mr. West is Mr. Miracle, or Jack Kent Cooke unlocks his cashbox to get some players, there will be a different sound in Los Angeles. Boo. Boo.

"There isn't really much talent here," says Calvin. No kidding.

CONTINUED

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A Victorian period Medical Officer's pouch and belt of the Grenadier Guards.



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I kind of expected they'd put us in there," says Denver Coach Larry Brown, making "in there" sound as if he meant some kind of medieval torture chamber. He refers to the Midwest Division, the NBA's own Cuckoo's Nest which, after a year of being simply awful, will once again take its rightful place as the sticks and stones and broken bones division. New boys Denver and Indiana will find that the Midwest is not just up for grabs. It's up for pokes, pushes, kicks and punches in the face.

Denver is not about to run away from the action, but the mercenary Nuggets never stand around long enough for anybody to get a clear crack at them. Denver scored more points per game than anyone last year (122) and won the most games (60) by an average spread of six points. The Nuggets owe much to the aerial magic of David Thompson (26 points per game), but this is a team that uses 10 men and plays the running, passing offense and the pressing, jump-switching defense—a concept as foreign to the Midwest's traditional slowdown, patterned attack as the friendly handshake. Opposite Thompson, Bobby Jones is the perfect defensive forward for a Brown-coached team. He can run with Rick Barry and John Havlicek, jump with Julius Erving and George McGinnis, and shoot like nobody else—he has the best two-year shooting percentage in the league. When Jones does sit down, or when Thompson moves back to guard—which will happen often: "He's easily our best defensive guard," says Brown—in comes Jones' practically identical twin, "Gus Gerard. Then there is the Geritol Squad, ABA original Byron Beck and the legendary Willie Wise. Beck looks like someone Mel Brooks created, but he'll hit his hook until rigor mortis sets in; the 6' 6" Wise, a three-time ABA All-Star with a 19-point career average, is a rescued free agent from the defunct Virginia Squires. The guards, Ralph Sampson and Chuck Williams, will get plenty of help—some from Thompson; some from Fatty Taylor, back from a year's exile to Virginia; some from defensive specialist Ted (Hound) McLain, stolen from the Nets; and some from the ever-improving sprite, Monte Towe.

If there is a weakness in the Nuggets, most opponents believe it is at center, where 6' 9" Dan Issel sports his gap-toothed glare. But he was Denver's sec-

MIDWEST DIVISION

ond-leading scorer with 23 points a game, and if he's a bit too slow-footed to chase the likes of Dave Cowens or Alvan Adams, or too small to handle Gilmore or Abdul-Jabbar, Issel is not bothered. "We help each other," he says. And he is not the only center; 7' 1" Marvin (Human Eraser) Webster is sound and strong. And Brown is talking about playing the 6' 9" Jones at center and moving Issel into the corner at times. Brown's not kidding. "Jones can do anything," he says. So can the Nuggets. Even win the NBA.

If they do, it will be without the help of the division's other Brown, Herb, who coaches Detroit and happens to be Larry's big brother. "My brother and I don't talk," says Larry. "I think he wants to show me up," says Herb. Herb is not so much worried about their first professional clash as he is about his other problems. He has been given an ultimatum: win or else. Brown did win after taking over the club upon Ray Scott's firing last year—10 of the Pistons' last 11 games—only to lose a heroic six-game playoff series to Golden State. But Center Bob Lanier, the team's unquestioned leader, more than once has made known his disgust with Brown's screaming, manic coaching style. Herb is looking at the most talented collection of big men in the league—Lanier, Marvin Barnes, M. L. Carr, Curtis Rowe, Al Eberhard and 6' 9" rookie prize Leon Douglas from Alabama—and feeling the heat.

Take Barnes. Barnes' two years with St. Louis produced these numbers: 24.1 points and 13.4 rebounds per game, 15 no-shows. Lanier has taken responsibility for seeing that Barnes is bruising on the court instead of cruising in his Rolls. On the forward line Rowe comes off his best of five inconsistent years, but he has not made management happy with his demands to be traded. Carr, who started opposite Barnes for St. Louis as a rookie last year, is 6' 6", 205 and built like a smaller Paul Silas. Eberhard runs through walls. Douglas? "One of the strongest men I ever played against," says Lanier.

Kevin Porter is still favoring the leg

...AND THEY WERE WEARING SHORT PANTS AND CARRYING BASKETBALLS AND THE LAST THING WE REMEMBER THEIR SAYING WAS WELCOME TO THE MIDWEST DIVISION.



he broke and sharing time at one guard with Eric Money. Chris Ford is steady, but not the big guard Brown is looking for. It could be tough John Mengelt or Rutgers rookie Phil Sellers. Or Brown just may not have one.

Larry Costello has been trying to get more aggressiveness out of Milwaukee's 7' Center Elmore Smith for a year now. He may have found a way: match him up in practice against Swen Nater, a bruiser who last played for Virginia. "They were both real happy when the exhibition games started," says Buck publicist John Steinmiller. They had fun with Chicago's Artis Gilmore right away. In a highly physical game, Smith reacted to an elbow from Gilmore by smashing the ball square into his face. Moments later, Nater landed two fists hard in the same spot. Costello was pleased. He would be more pleased if his best defensive forward, David Meyers, hadn't torn up his knee and if Meyers' backup, Junior Bridgeman, hadn't injured an Achilles tendon. That leaves Costello without a veteran strong forward to play opposite Bobby Dandridge. He will go with 6' 8" rookie Alex English, a second-round steal from South Carolina. Rookie Quinn Buckner from Indiana will displace Gary Brokaw as a starting guard alongside Brian Winters, the shooting whiz. Behind them is another rookie, Lloyd Walton, a quick penetrator from Marquette.

continued

SCOUTING REPORTS continued

Chicagoans may have a tough time recognizing their Bulls. In came the 7'2" Gilmore of Kentucky, the plum of the ABA dispersal draft, rookie Scott May of Indiana and two rookie guards, Willie Smith (Missouri) and Keith Starr (Pittsburgh). Also a new coach, Ed Badger, who says the Bulls are going to run this year. Run? A team that always has trouble beating the 24-second clock?

The Bulls will be without Guard Jerry Sloan for the first time in 10 years, and will be operating with Norm Van Lier as their only experienced backcourt man. Veteran Forward Bob Love and Van Lier both profess to be newly inspired. May was to have battled the much improved Mueky Johnson for a starting forward spot, but for the time being is sidelined with mononucleosis. So, depressingly enough, is Jack Marin, another of Badger's veteran forwards. Badger's biggest problem is that lack of another seasoned guard. Second-year man John Laskowski will start, with relief from Smith, a fine shooter out of Missouri who is learning defense, and Starr, a fourth-round pick who could be a sleeper.

The Kansas City Kings could be the sleeper of the division. Phil Johnson was Coach of the Year in '74-'75 with a team he didn't like, then he lost his last season. Fingering his guards, Tiny Archibald and Jimmy Walker, as the core of the problem, Johnson and General Manager Joe Axelson cleared them out. "Last year we couldn't mail a ball to the front line," says Axelson. Now the Kings have Johnson's kind of team. For Archibald the Kings got two Nets: Brian Taylor, an excellent defensive guard, and Jim Eakins, a reliable backup center. From the ABA dispersal draft came Guards Ron Boone, a 22-point scorer, and his St. Louis teammate Mike Barr. From the college draft came 6'10" UCLA Forward Richard Washington. Survivors include Center Sam Lacey, quick Forwards Scott Wedman and Ollie Johnson, and the powerful Bill Robinson, who only needs to learn not to foul (he led the NBA in disqualifications last year). They all can play the style Johnson coaches: slow, cautious offense, pressure defense. Straight from the Dick Motta school, of which Johnson has been a student since junior high.

Indiana Coach Slick Leonard would like to win some games, sure, but he concedes, "On paper, we're the weakest team comin' in. Maybe even weaker than the Pacers." The Pacers are not going to lie down, but Leonard does have this intriguing thought in the back of his mind: if the Pacers should somehow finish last in the West and win a coin flip for the No. 1 pick in next year's draft, why there's a pretty good center just 45 miles down the road in Bloomington, name of Kent Benson. Throw Benson in with the amazing Billy Knight, voted the second-best forward in the ABA last year (behind Erving but ahead of David Thompson) and the Pacers' outstanding defensive guard, Don Base, and they'll have a club something like the one that used to play for the ABA championship. Right now, with second-year man Dan Roundfield at center replacing the injured Len Elmore, Darnell Hillman, Wil Jones and Steve Green the other forwards, plus Darrell Elston, Mike Flynn and the veteran Freddie Lewis at guard, the Pacers look like they're moving, ever backward, toward that pot of gold.

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING IN THE NBA? ONLY HAVING TO REMEMBER THE ALAMO AND NOT WHICH TEAMS ARE STILL IN THE LEAGUE THIS WEEK.



CENTRAL DIVISION

As the Dick Motta, Dick Motta show opens the fall season for the first time in Washington, can the pampered Bullets find happiness with a tough guy? If Cleveland is for real, will the Cavaliers survive the Fitch-Milleti feud? Will the wedding of Pistol Pete and Gail Gail breed a bouncing winner in New Orleans? Can Tom Nissalke turn those nice young men from Houston into a bunch of muggers? Even with San Antonio unleashing all that new ABA talent, will the Central Division become another Alamo? Is Atlanta still in Georgia?

In Scene 1 Motta arrives in the capital as part of the shuffle that brought nine coaching changes to the league, four of them to this geographically ungainly division, which now spans the 1,559 miles between the banks of the Potomac and South Texas. Fired after a dismal 24-58 season with the Chicago Bulls, the fiery Motta replaces K. C. Jones, a quiet and gentle man with a three-year record of 155-91. Jones' sin: finishing second to less talented Cleveland last season in the division and then losing to them in the first round of the playoffs.

It will be Motta's chore to awaken the talented Bullets from the complacency that lulled them to eight defeats in their last 12 regular-season games. Washington's springtime slide carried over into the playoffs, reduced the Bullets' dreaded fast break to a crawl and allowed Cleveland to win—four games to three—though scoring fewer than 90 points in three-quarters of their victories. Exit the taciturn tactician K. C. Jones.

"I'm not going in with my six-guns drawn," says Motta, who has never been known to own a pair of velvet gloves. "I'm not going to pound my chest and say this is the way we are going to do things. There is a lot I have to learn about these players, and there is a lot they have to learn about me. But they are no strangers to me. I've seen them play. I've competed against them. I've hated them."

Those whom Motta once hated are very much still there: Elvin Hayes and Len (Truck) Robinson, the forwards; Wes Unseld, solid and stoic at center; Dave Bing and Phil Chenier, the sharp-shooting guards. It is a team that lives and dies with the fast break. In contrast Mot-

continued

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ta is a coach who lived and died at Chicago with the slow, patterned offense.

Motta, who has shown unexpected adaptability, says, "I love to fast-break. I always did it in college. But at Chicago, how could I? The Bulls will run. I'd be a fool not to take advantage of Unsel's great outlet passing. I look at the Bulls like I would a 73 golfer. All the Bulls need is a little improvement to win four, five, six more games."

At the moment the battle between Cleveland Coach Bill Fitch and Owner Nick Mileti has cooled, mainly because there is nothing like winning to repair ruptured egos. Should the Cavs pick up where they left off last season—taking the heavily favored Boston Celtics to six games in the NBA Eastern finals—Mileti may even forgive Fitch's attempted desertion to Los Angeles in the final weeks of the season.

Defense was the spur to Cleveland's sudden and unexpected success. While finishing next to last in the league in scoring (101.7 per game), the Cavs were second only to Chicago in points allowed (99.2).

Strangely, the one area in which the Cavs are strongest is in the backcourt, where Jim Cleamons, the team quarterback, is just reaching his peak at 27, and Dick Snyder continues to be one of the best pure shooting guards in the league. And Fitch lost little when he went to Austin Carr (his comeback successful after two knee operations), and Fouts Walker, who supplied the spark and speed from the bench. And so, of course, the Cavs' first-draft choices were guards: Chuckie Williams of Kansas State and Mo Howard of Maryland.

Thanks to the unselfish tutelage of Nate Thurmond, ABA castoff Jimmy Chones has emerged as a solid center. And with Thurmond still around to add maturity and leavening to the Cavs, Fitch can be assured that there will be no drop-off in intensity of play when Chones replaces to the sideline. "Thurmond made this ball club," says Fitch simply.

For points from up front, there are Bingo Smith and the ever-improving Campy Russell, and for muscle there is Jim Brewer. Last season Fitch won by sending his Cavs at the enemy in waves. Going into the playoffs, Cleveland's top scorer was Chones (15.8). The Cavs made up for their lack of a superstar with sev-

en players in double figures. To repeat, they'll need every bit of that again.

The new lad on the block—if you can call trips to Cleveland (1,404 miles), Washington (1,559) and Atlanta (983) down the street—is San Antonio, one of the NBA Four, and a lot stronger than most NBA oldtimers expect.

The Spurs will be coming in with a new coach, former Denver assistant Doug Moe, who is an advocate of the pressure defense and a fast-breaking offense. And Moe has got the studs to work with. For openers, up front there is Larry Kenon, a powerful 6' 9" ex-New York Net who averaged 11 rebounds and 18.7 points; and George Gervin, a 6' 7" All-Star, who averaged 21.8 points. Billy Paultz, another ex-Net, should be more mobile at center now that he has pared down to a swelter 240. The backcourt is well supplied with James Silas, another All-Star, muscular Mike Gale, a 6' 4" defensive specialist; and seven-time All-Star Louie Dampier, late of Kentucky, in reserve. If Moe can teach that crew to play defense, it will make all those long trips worthwhile.

At one point the irrepressible Butch van Breda Kolff was predicting no less than an 81-1 season for his New Orleans Jazz. But that was before Sidney Wicks, supposedly en route from Portland in a straight cash deal, elected not to report. Still, the Jazz now have the extraordinary services of Gail Goodrich, another free shooter, and if he and Pete Maravich discover they can work together in the same backcourt, well, things should be super in the Super Dome.

Goodrich is no stranger to being paired with another fine ball-handling guard. For most of his time with the Lakers, the guy on the other side was a dribbler named Jerry West. Butch's first worry is to get his stars healthy. Goodrich has been suffering from an Achilles tendon injury, and Maravich, seldom healthy before the season opens, this time discovered a pinched nerve in his neck.

After two nonproductive seasons under Johnny Egan, Houston finally went to the trade mart in an effort to escape the dreariness of seasons like 41-41 and 40-42. First off, they replaced Egan with Tom Nissalke, formerly of Seattle. Dallas, San Antonio and Utah.

Nissalke inherits a wingling shooting team, which last season averaged 106.2

points a game. The Rockets' problem was that they gave up 107. Being charitable, Nissalke said the Rockets played a soft defense; in the last three years only one Rocket has ever been involved in a fight. The lone battler was Calvin Murphy, the 5' 9" guard who has suffered no worse than a draw against some of the giants of the league.

From the ABA, the Rockets picked up five-year veteran Tom Owens, who is expected to push Kevin Kunnert at center, and added Dwight Jones, a part-time swingman up front from Atlanta. But their best move was to use their No. 1 pick in the whole NBA draft to take John Lucas, the All-American guard from Maryland. "John will step in and play," Nissalke says. "He's got great floor sense and he directs a team. He and Scott May were the only players in the draft with no weakness."

Until the owners stop sitting on their money, nothing will help Atlanta, not even bringing in Hube Brown as the coaching replacement for Cotton Fitzsimmons. Desperate for a center, the Hawks had chances for good big men in both the college draft and the ABA dispersal draft—and both times opted for less costly guards. With an attitude like that, they deserve what they get.

Which can be nothing. A year ago they drafted David Thompson and Marvin Webster and lost both to Denver in a one-sided bidding contest. In this year's college draft they had the No. 1 pick and traded their draft rights to Houston for 6' 10" Joe Meriweather, a forward-center in his rookie year. Then they used their other first-round pick (No. 9) to choose Guard Armond Hill of Princeton. In the ABA dispersal draft, with such big men as Moses Malone, Maurice Lucas and Marvin Barnes available, Atlanta traded its No. 2 pick to Portland and got in return All-Star Geoff Petrie, yet another guard.

With the additions of Petrie and Hill, the return of injured veteran Tom Henderson, plus rookie Ken Charles from the L.A. summer league, the Hawks have guards aplenty. Forward is another matter. John Drew can be erratic. Lou Hudson has never been the leader Atlanta hoped for, but Bill Walton played creditably last year as the youngest man in the league. In all, it should be another long season for Atlanta.

END



NOT AT ALL LIKE UP HOME IN MICHIGAN



A hunter from the Midwest strains to concentrate on Okeechobee ducks as an imaginary swarm of dangerous creatures slithers all around his feet

by JIM HARRISON

An hour before dawn it was unseasonably warm, with the wind out of the southeast pushing a bank of thunderheads in the moonlight. It was indolent weather, the sort one associates with the morning hatch on a trout stream in July. It was mid-December but there were mosquitoes in the air at the marina. I swatted at them while my friend finished loading the skiff with decoys and shotguns and attempted to coax his yellow Labrador, Rain, into the boat.

Rain is a wonderful dog. When you are around people and call out to her, everyone looks up in the air. If you shout "Rain" angrily, the people are likely to look askance at both you and the sky, and feel sorry for the dog. On this morning Rain was acting put upon and, when called, lay on the dock with her feet in the air. She didn't want to go for a boat ride in the dark for as yet unrevealed reasons. I lifted the dog gently into the boat as the motor started.

Lake Okeechobee proved to be the strangest body of water I've ever been on. Leaving the marina we traveled down a long canal, still in total darkness. The canal abuts a huge dike built during the Depression to control Okeechobee's floodwaters. The lake level is thus higher than the canal, so your boat must go through a small lock that opens at 5:30 a.m. for duck hunters, bass fishermen, commercial catfish long-liners and other odd citizens who might want to be out on the lake as the world wisely sleeps. The lock was strangely thrilling to an outsider. As the skiff rose a foot under the arc lights, the attendant yelled down for our boat's identification number and the operator's name. I learned later that our goings and comings were recorded, in part to keep us from staying lost if we got lost. Okeechobee is an immense lake, and the swamps of palmetto, saw grass and cane are a navigational nightmare that takes years to solve. To the unexperienced Northerner, Okeechobee looks like the "green hell" of stories and motion pictures; a sense of insecurity mixes with breakfast in the pit of the stomach.

It was a half-hour run to our spot, and our speed in the dark was appalling, near-

ly 40 knots, with bugs stinging against the face so powerfully that you tried to keep your head down. The speed seemed senseless, but we wanted to set out our decoys before dawn broke. One consolation was that Okeechobee lacks the logs and deadheads that plague northern lakes. I signaled happily to my friend as our boat lapped up large rafts of ducks. He shook his head and yelled, "Coots!" over the roar of the big outboard motor. A coot is a daffy, unwary member of the rail family. In sporting terms shooting a coot is akin to shooting a parked car.

Phobias are clearly understood only by those who share them. My wife's vertigo I find quietly amusing, though she hid in the backseat in terror on a day when we drove over the Bighorn Mountains. Mice and spiders can crawl over me if they choose. And on airliners I often sleep during takeoffs and landings. However, snakes drive me up—and over—the wall with a visceral kick of adrenaline. Thus, when we reached our spot and I stepped off the bow of the boat into a large truck inner tube with a sling in the middle, my heart pounded at the thought of water moccasins. The inner tube is unquestionably a wonderful device for warm-water duck shooting, but within moments, sitting in one, you feel a terrible sort of vulnerability. Your waded legs hang down treading water—an obvious alligator meal—and though the top of the tube is six inches above the water, you are sure this is no barrier for the ferocious moccasins that slither around in search of Michigan hunters dumb enough to challenge Okeechobee.

I pulled myself through the reeds to where my friend stood on a ladder in the chest-deep water. Rain sat on her platform looking utterly bored, her eyes peeking out from the camouflage covering. She was glad to see me and wriggled precariously on her narrow seat. I explained my fears. My friend shoed me away.

"Nonsense! We can't hunt this close together. We'll make an outline, and the ducks won't come into the decoys."

"I'm not sure I like you anymore," I said, pushing back toward my spot. "I

continued

don't see any ducks around anyhow."

"Ssshhhh!" he hissed, pointing out into the lake, now gray with dawn.

I could see a large raft of ducks about 200 yards away that he seemed to know weren't coot. My fears were not really allayed, though. I had heard a probably apocryphal story about a water skier who had fallen into an Alabama lake and been attacked by hordes of moccasins. But then a giddy resignation began to come over me. How noble to die a truly "natural" death. It was the same feeling I have had in grizzly territory in Montana or at sea when the motor fails. Or in Africa once when we lost our transmission near a pride of lions.

This utter irrationality is peculiar to



phobias. I have never had an accurate intuition in my life, but a few days before, while snipe hunting near Palm Beach, I had envisioned one of the particular, very individual giant eastern diamondbacks striking the back of my knee as I stepped over a log. As I fell mortally wounded, after blasting the snake, I knew what I would say to my friend: "Looks like you'll have to clean the birds." This mood had ruined my shooting for the first hour; it is difficult to lead a bird properly when you are staring at the ground in front of your feet. But, avoiding the nonexistent logs, I had begun hitting birds, and we soon had our limit. On the way back to the car my friend said, "Think about it this way. You're never going to see the one that gets you." Wonderful.

By midmorning on Okeechobee, north-

ing duckwise, as they might say on Madison Avenue, had occurred. My interest had long since turned from the innately bobbing decoys to the overwhelming life in the reeds behind me. In a lifetime as an amateur bird watcher, I had never eyeballed warblers so closely, and there was a profligate amount of other bird life. The birds would bathe, then stand on lily pads to dry, all within a startling few feet of my camouflaged mound in the water. The warblers saved the lives of the three ring-bills that did fly over. Before I recognized the sound—the staccato huff and sigh of low-flying ducks—they were well past range.

By noon we decided to make the run back to the lodge for lunch. My skepticism about Okeechobee duck life was soothed, so we made a short detour out into the lake. We flushed great rafts of ring-bills. Hordes of ducks. Thousands of them, in fact. I had never seen so many ducks, and the whole purpose of the trip returned in main strength. The trouble was that it was so hot and clear and calm that there was nothing to urge the birds in toward the sheltered water of the reed beds. The fact that I had leaned forward too far to study warblers and had filled my waders didn't matter. The warmth of the water was tropical. There were plenty of bass there in the weeds; a rod would have served me better than a shotgun. At one point a bass fisherman had passed quietly in a boat with an electric motor and cast a plug near me. I had considered shooting the jitterbug as a practical joke but instead had raised my camouflage net and grinned. The fisherman had widened his eyes, then pretended indifference. I should have shot the plug.

At lunch we ate a big basket of catfish freshly caught from the lake and drank a copious amount of beer to counter the heat. The bass mounted on the lodge wall were immense, any of the hundreds would have been a trophy in Michigan. My thoughts went back to all the warblers I had seen just after dawn; they had enough sense to leave Michigan for the winter while I turned my home into a hibernating cave. If you wanted to hunt our late bluebill season in December you would likely tear your waders on the ice.

And as a night person who can't really sleep before 3 a.m., I found the classical shooting of Okeechobee most improbable. Dawn in a duck blind back home would require a tailored polar-bear skin for comfort. People do it by the thou-

sands, but I don't have to admire them for it. A leisurely breakfast at midmorning perfectly suits the grouse hunter.

After a nap we returned to the lake with revived interest. We covered a crazy-quilt 40 miles on a scouting trip and again saw thousands of ducks, but few within less than mortar range of shore. I explained the highly dangerous cut-shell method to my friend. With a jackknife you make No. 6 bird shot shoot like a slug. You fire over distant rafts of ducks and, you hope, flush them toward your blind. I leave out the technical explanation here to avoid poisoning young minds.

On our scouting expedition I shot a particularly low-flying duck—a cripple, in fact—that we had seen swimming in circles before its wobbly takeoff. Crippled game is the most unsavory aspect of hunting. It makes any aware hunter queasy, but most know that it can be largely avoided by not taking the long shot known as "sky busting." It is a disgusting practice. While grouse can fall with a single pellet, a duck is a sturdier creature and any grace the sport possesses demands the etiquette of a surer shot.

We finally found a likely spot near a point. While putting out the decoys, I saw a large animal swimming in the water some 50 yards away. It was plainly an alligator. We motored over to get some idea of its size. Measured against the skiff the alligator was around 13 feet long and girthy. It submerged and came up another 30 yards or so away, but not really very far from where my legs were going to be hanging down through the inner tube. My friend was nonchalant and I tried to ape his attitude of indifference. Now I had something new to fret about—compared to which a moccasin would look as puny as a tadpole.

Oddly, I was soon able to push the alligator from my mind. It has taken me too many years to learn that when you are hunting you can think of nothing else. There is nothing more painful than wandering through a clearing thinking about lunch and flushing half a dozen grouse. This had happened to me one October, and I had blown the only truly easy shots of the season.

But within an hour my attentiveness began to dissipate. Again the ducks were out there on the horizon, sitting still and comfortable like tiny floating Buddhas. A bald eagle passed high above us. Hundreds of swallows flew in from the lake;

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Intake/Exhaust Manifolds	YES	NO	NO	NO	Clutch Linings	YES	NO	NO	YES
Water Pump	YES	NO	NO	NO	Wiper Blades	YES	NO	NO	NO
Drive Train Parts Covered					All Light Bulbs	YES	NO	YES	NO
Rear Axle-Differential	YES	NO	NO	NO	Hoses and Belts	YES	YES	NO	NO
Internal Transmission Parts	YES	NO	NO	NO	Mufflers	YES	NO	NO	YES
Transmission Case	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tail Pipes	YES	NO	NO	YES
Torque Converter	YES	NO	NO	NO	Services Provided Free				
Clutch	YES	NO	NO	NO	Free Loaner Car	YES	NO	NO	NO
Drive Shaft	YES	NO	NO	NO	Trip Interruption Program	YES	NO	NO	NO
Services Provided Free					SPECIAL NOTICE All benefits of BPP II are also available on all new 1976 AMC models purchased on or after September 1, 1976.				
Free Loaner Car	YES	NO	NO	NO					
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they were barely higher than our heads.

"Ducks! A single coming in from your right," my friend hissed.

By the time I shot, the duck had spread its wings to settle with the decoys. Rain burst from her platform and retrieved the bird. I gave a few whoops to honor our change in luck.

"It's a redhead," my friend yelled. "A female."

I slumped in my inner tube low enough to fill my waders. Redheads are protected in Florida. Each redhead shot represents 70 points of an allowable 100 points for a day's shooting. I now had a cripple and a 70-point duck to my sporadic credit.

Another hour passed. Rain sneezed and I whirled and screamed, thinking the sneeze was the attack cry of the bull alligator. There was nothing behind me but darkening swamp.

We loaded our gear and picked up the decoys. The long-suffering Rain huddled in the boat demanding a tummy rub. The motor wouldn't start; the battery was dead. I held the light in the gathering dark while my friend dismantled the cowl and tried to start the motor by hand with a piece of rope. It was some 15 miles back to the lodge. Short of foraging and riding the alligator, how could we make it? Then part of the cowl fell into the black water. My friend, who works out daily in a karate dojo, stamped and yelled. I feared he might kick the boat to pieces. Finally the motor started, and we made our way haltingly back in the dark.

At the lodge our hunting friends, a young couple from Palm Beach who shared our two-room cabin, listened sympathetically. They shyly admitted that they had shot their limit. After several drinks we cooked a meal of venison chops and went over to the main lodge to play Bingo. I hadn't played Bingo in 20 years and looked forward to it, but when we entered the hall, a local wise guy asked, "How many ducks?"

"Forty-seven redheads," I yelled to the assembled Bingo players. It was a show-stopper.

Dawn again—a butter-thick, damp dark full of bugs. During our sleepy wait at the lock, the keeper called down to say that the week before a crew of vacationing Miami homicide detectives had shot their limit every day. Then he said that it was too warm and still for duck hunting and that we should have stayed in

bed. Or gone bass fishing. As a trout fisherman, I look at bass as a variety of hyperelectable carp.

After the usual long run, we chose a spot with no real confidence. As the sky lightened, some high-flying ducks passed over but did not pause at our decoys. Then we heard shooting from well behind us, perhaps a mile into the swamp. More shooting came from down the lake shore a few hundred yards, but also well into the swamp. Our irritation grew as we watched high flights pass over, followed by more shooting. As the shots became intermittent my friend left me to do a little spying down the lake. After 15 minutes he returned looking happy. He had hidden in the rushes and had seen a small skiff emerge from a channel so narrow that it was invisible from the lake proper. We loaded up and went for a look with a conspiratorial air.

We passed through a long reedy cut into a small pond but could find no blind. Then we found yet another small channel, and now we had to get out in our waders and push the skiff. The going was obnoxious and oozy, the surroundings resembling an aquatic viper farm. Rain watched us from the stern of the boat with modest curiosity. Eureka? We emerged into another pond that held, smack in the middle, a lovely little duck blind built of palmetto fronds.

We sped back for lunch and a quick nap. At the lock we joined another boat, in which my friend recognized the builder of the blind. He asked us about our luck, and we said zilch. He said, "Got a few myself." Which meant his limit, if the number of shots we had heard was any indication. Back at the marina, it was apparent that he was packing up for the trip home.

There was no nap this day. We had another catfish lunch. The radio promised a northern front, and back out on the lake we could see the clouds coming on the far horizon with the wind picking up and the lake developing a stiff chop. The temperature began to drop, and the lake was clearing of the ubiquitous bass fishermen.

We eased rather strenuously back into our discovered spot and hastily set out the decoys. The blind was small and the shooting would be close. My friend returned the boat to the channel for hiding and to discourage anyone else's entry. We were barely situated when the ring-bills began to come in. I was pleased

when the ducks wouldn't decoy but instead would come over for a look at full speed—perhaps 20 yards in the air, right or left. This made for the most demanding sort of pass shooting. Rain was so pleased that she was hard to restrain on her perch during the frequent misses. She only resumed her true character when, upon retrieving a bird, she delivered, then quickly turned to Silly Party in the water. I had to lift her back on the platform with the water running down under my sleeves. Then I arranged her limbs, turned my face while she shook off the water, and rearranged the camouflage.

We limited out well before dusk, feeling inordinately proud of our shooting and sleuth work. The next day we had equally good luck and became even more careful about taking reasonable shots. Still, we lost several cripples, and it was disturbing to watch the dog swim in narrowing circles around the scent of duck Ringbills, bluebills and other diving ducks that are wounded will go under, grab a strand of weed and stay there until they drown. This singular fact keeps me from ever becoming an ardent duck hunter, no matter how delightful the sport can be.

I finally got a moderately difficult double. Despite more than a decade of hardcore shooting, I am still a C-plus shot. During our lazy moments we discussed the menu we intended to cook for 20 people when we got back to Palm Beach. My friend mentioned that in the seven years we have fished and hunted together we have talked about our weight and diets on an hourly basis to no visible effect. We ended up serving a feast that reflected our figures, courses of crab fingers, moules marinière, snipe broiled and flamed in Calvados, then chilled, sautéed duck breasts in a vermouth cream sauce, venison stew and a country ham. It is fun to cook something you can't find in even the best restaurants on earth.

On our way into the lodge that last afternoon we were lucky enough to be granted the kind of grace note given only to those who spend a great deal of time outdoors. First the sun went blood red from the smoke caused by farmers burning off cane. Then that red sun was caught in the froth at the wave tips as the promised rough weather started to chop up the lake. Rafts of coots skittered out of the way, and above, the first southward flock of teal wheeled in a swift-moving cloud.

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From his office at a corner table in a joint on State Street in Chicago last Friday night, Big Tom the bookie said, "I make this out to be the worst mismatch since Pearl Harbor. Michigan has got the fastest backfield in the history of the Big Ten. Northwestern has got scholars. The line says Michigan by 33. But you can't hardly get none of my colleagues to book it. You know why? The numbers are too high. What kind of a idiot would give 33 to any team in the world? But what kind of a idiot would take Northwestern and 33 against Michigan? In my business you want to do heavy trade with suckers. You can get killed fooling around with idiots."

Judging from the screaming and imploring and general button-busting racket at Northwestern's Dycie Stadium the next afternoon, there must have been an army of bettors on both sides of the line. Considering that only 31,045 people showed up for the Michigan-Northwestern game in the first place, the last couple of minutes reached a level of loud-mouth usually found only in those games that match fire against water.

The question was: Would Northwestern score? Would the poets, artists and drama majors, who had lost 11 games in a row, actually make a touchdown or even kick a field goal against the No. 1 team in the nation?

That the question involved more than pride or curiosity could be detected by shouts of "Kill 'em! Kill 'em!" and "Fumble! Fumble!" and "Please, God, give me just one break in this life!" Such shouts accompany the finish of a game with a wager on it. Ordinarily you would not observe such behavior in a home crowd whose team is behind 38-0 with about a minute to play. Ordinarily the crowd would have been out in the parking lot honking at each other by then.

With a fourth and three at the Michigan 13, Northwestern Quarterback Randy Dean threw a pass to Wally Kasprczyk for five yards. Bedlam. It was Dean's 10th pass completion. For a quarterback with a broken arm, that is about halfway remarkable, no matter what class the opposition.

Actually, it wasn't Dean's whole arm that was broken. It was his wrist. And it was his left wrist, whereas he throws with his right. But it is against NCAA rules to play wearing a cast, so Dean's left arm from elbow to fingertip was wrapped in tape, bandages and sponge rubber. Ev-

"Idiots" can kill you quick

... AND SO CAN NO. 1-RANKED MICHIGAN, AS A LOT OF TEAMS HAVE FOUND OUT LATELY. BUT AT NORTHWESTERN THEY LIVED AND DIED WITH THE POINT SPREAD

ery time Dean fell on his left arm you wanted to cry out in sympathetic pain. Or else you wanted to cry out that one of the top engineering students at Northwestern ought to have more sense.

Northwestern's best runner, the school's alltime rushing leader, Tailback Greg Boykin, tore up his knee in the first quarter two weeks ago while the Wildcats were being shut out by Indiana. Boykin will not play again this year. Dean isn't sure when he broke his wrist. Maybe it was against Indiana, maybe before. "My adrenaline gets to rushing so fast that I forget my wrist hurts," Dean says.

Anyhow, there were three running plays and then a time-out was called with 34 seconds left, fourth and goal from the four. The crowd going crazy. What to do?

Whatever small success opponents have had against the Michigan defense this year has come from passing. Scott Yelvington of Northwestern, on that

fourth down, needed one more catch to be Pat Richter of Wisconsin as the Big Ten's 10th alltime receiver.

Dean threw a pass to Yelvington for a touchdown.

Dycie Stadium broke up with noise. Far to the south you could see the skyline of Chicago wobble as the reverberations busted into the smog. Over to the east the whitecaps on Lake Michigan shuddered.

"They ought to call this place the Windy City," said Big Tom the bookie. His nose was blue from the cold but his heart was warm from the day's work. Big Tom had booked the game. Most of the action that came into his office on State Street was giving the points. The score was 38-7, Michigan. Giving the points was a loser.

But those who took the points, or even those who were interested in the metaphysical implications of scoring a touchdown against Michigan after all these

continued



THE WOLVERINES' LYTLE RUSHED FOR 172 YARDS AND SCORED TWICE IN THE 38-7 VICTORY



PORTRAIT OF A WINNER: SCHEMBECHLER

years, were winners. Long into the night they whooped and chanted. "Never have I seen so many people claim a team that got beat 38-7 done so good," said Big Tom. "On the other hand, never have I heard so many people who give the 33 points bitch that their side wasn't trying to throw the bomb on the last two plays of the game."

Bo Schembechler, the Michigan coach, was not trying to hold down the score, if that is consolation to those on the wrong end of a wager. Because Bo used to be a roommate at Miami of Ohio of Northwestern Coach John Pont doesn't mean Bo froze on the trigger. Michigan had beaten Stanford 51-0 and Navy 70-14 and had outscored the opposition 234-51 heading into the Northwestern game. Near the end of the first half, leading Northwestern by 31-0, Michigan called a time-out with eight seconds left on the clock and tried a 55-yard field goal. That does not sound like cooling it with the scoreboard.

Neither does keeping most of the Michigan first team on offense in the game deep into the fourth quarter. Bo did yank the defensive first team with a mere 38-0 cushion. But he thinks that may have been a mistake.

"I probably should have taken out the offensive first unit and left the defense in there to hold Northwestern back," Schembechler said.

To preserve the shutout? "I don't care that much about shutouts," he said. To protect the point spread? "What point

spread? I don't pay any attention to point spreads," he said.

Schembechler was grinning and nodding and drinking a soft drink out of a can. His yellow shirt was smudged. He had his meet-the-public face on. But you could see he was tired and bothered by the way he would duck his head and his eyeballs would sink for a moment. After all, this is Bo's first time to be No. 1 in the nation, right from the opening forecast straight on through more than half the season. And Bo is a certified heart case. Bo had his heart attack the day his Michigan team went to the Rose Bowl and lost, in 1970. The old blood pump is still tricky enough that Schembechler had to lay out of spring training this year. If he sat by himself for a while on a locker room bench after the Northwestern game and allowed his head to throb and his eyes to shut who should be surprised?

His quarterback, Rick Leach, had spent much of the spring playing baseball and there was no question his attention was divided. As a high school senior in Flint, Leach was said to have been offered a \$100,000 bonus to sign with the Phillies. To get him to Ann Arbor, Bo had to promise Leach that he could play baseball, too. Last year as a freshman it was said of Leach that his passing style belonged in the other sport. In the spring Leach cut loose with a hard, low, one-bounce throw from center field to third base to catch a runner. "That's the way you throw a football," somebody yelled from the stands. "One bounce!"

Last year Michigan went ahead of Ohio State 14-7 in the fourth quarter, but Leach threw a couple of interceptions and Michigan lost. Then Leach did not complete another pass until the fourth quarter of an Orange Bowl loss to Oklahoma. In the Orange Bowl, Bo had Leach throw nothing but long passes for fear of interceptions. Now Schembechler says Leach has become something of a passer, at last. Against Northwestern, Leach threw seven passes, completed three and had two intercepted. At one point Leach threw three passes two plays in a row. "We were afraid he might get a sore arm," Bo said. But Leach's three completions covered 101 yards, scored one touchdown and set up another. Besides, it is Leach's shorter passes, his pitchouts, that are vital to the Michigan offense.

Against Northwestern, the Michigan fullback, Rob Lytle, moved to tailback

for much of the game. Lytle is a compact 6'1", 195 pounds, a sprinter on the track team who is often used as a blocker for fellow sprinter Harlan Huckleby, the regular tailback. Against Northwestern Lytle rushed for 172 yards in 18 carries. With a hurt right knee.

"People hear I'm a Big Ten fullback and they look past me, wondering who is being talked about," Lytle said. (By comparison, the Ohio State fullback, Pete Johnson, is 247 pounds.) "But my style of running probably fits more as a fullback than it does as a tailback. Playing tailback, the thing that scares me most is the pitchout I'm concentrating on that defensive guy. That's one of the places where Rick is terrific. His pitchouts are soft and they come right into your hands."

Seven of the Michigan starters—including Offensive Guards Mark Donahue and Gerry Szara and Tackle Mike Kenn and Wingback Jim Smith (perhaps the team's best athlete, according to Schembechler)—are from the neighborhood of Dyche Stadium. Lytle, however, is from Fremont, Ohio, in Woody Hayes territory. For five generations Lytle's family has owned a clothing store on Front Street in Fremont. When Rob chose Michigan over Ohio State, people came into the store and said from now on they would rather go naked than buy a Lytle garment. "But they were mostly kidding, and my family is not that rah-rah about football anyway," says Lytle.

Woody also once courted Huckleby, inviting him down to watch the Ohio State-Michigan game when Huckleby was a high school senior in Detroit. Ohio State won the game 12-10 when Michigan missed a field goal. "I tried to be neutral, but I'm from Michigan and I couldn't help it. That game made up my mind," Huckleby said.

Schembechler said the thing that is bothering him now is that this season has been too easy. "We need a slugfest," he said. "We need to have it hanging in the balance. We need to need continuity snap after snap, to know we've got to drive it out, with the heat on. We need to give up the idea that we can score from anywhere on the field at any moment. We are going to run into some of those slugfests in the last part of the season. Nobody will know how good we are until we find out ourselves."

"I can tell him one thing," said Big Tom the bookie. "It didn't hurt him none

continued



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HOW TO EARN YOUR STRIPES

by Fran Tarkenton

I think one of the most important things in football is to try new things, especially when you're a kid. Don't be afraid to experiment. Explore your abilities. If you get the chance, play different positions like I did. How are you going to

know how to throw to a receiver unless you've been a receiver?

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL *continued*

to call it off in the second half against Northwestern. Lytle didn't run but three times for 30 yards in the second half. Leach didn't throw but one pass, and it was intercepted. The scholars looked real good in the second half. Now we will wait for the numbers to come down while Ohio State approaches on the Michigan schedule, and then we will see where the business comes from. Suckers and patriots, it's all the same. With idiots, I'm happy to have got out a winner."

THE WEEK

by RON REID

MIDWEST While Michigan betters may have felt their Wolverines scored too little, Oklahoma had a lot in gaining Big Eight revenge over Kansas 26-10. The Jayhawks, who were the last team to beat the sixth-ranked Sooners, led 10-3 at halftime before Oklahoma perished Kansas mistakes with the performance of quarterback Thomas Lott for its fifth victory.

Lott started in place of the ill Dean Blevins and completed none of four passes he threw. Two, in fact, went for interceptions, but Lott rushed for 104 yards on 19 carries and scored on 13-and-33-yard runs to earn the game ball from Coach Barry Switzer.

Kansas was utterly demoralized with nine minutes to play in the third quarter when Nolan Cromwell, the Jayhawks' superb wish-bone quarterback, went out with a knee injury. Cromwell underwent surgery on Sunday and is lost for the rest of the season.

Lott's 13-yard scoring run, which followed a Kansas fumble on the first play of the second half, tied the score, and shortly after Scott McMichael, Cromwell's replacement, threw an interception to Safety Scott Hill, Lott put the Sooners ahead to stay with his 33-yard ramble. Oklahoma also capitalized on another interception and another fumble for 10 more points.

Missouri, inevitably an upset victim when it isn't perpetrating upsets, fell victim to Iowa State 21-17 before a Homecoming crowd of 66,491, Faurot Field's largest of the season. The Tigers were done in by the rushing of sophomore Tailback Dexter Green, who picked up 214 yards on 37 carries and scored twice in the first half on runs of 65 and two yards. Missouri mistakes also hurt, especially the clipping call that nullified a 77-yard touchdown punt return by Leo Lewis. The infraction occurred with 4:26 left in the game. Iowa State improved its record to 5-1 while the seventh-ranked Tigers fell to 4-2.

"We've had some real squeakers that were

nerve-racking, so it was time," said Nebraska's Tom Osborne of the Cornhuskers' 51-0 rout of Kansas State. Nebraska again got a glittering performance from Quarterback Vince Ferragamo, who threw four touchdown passes for the second time this season.

Colorado wrote a freakish finish to its showdown with Oklahoma State, scoring two touchdowns in the last 43 seconds to win 20-10. Going for a score on fourth and 11 on the Cowboy 18-yard line, reserve Quarterback Jeff Knappe lofted a pass to Billy Waddy in the end zone. The ball was tipped, and OSU Safety Jerry Cramer intercepted. Instead of downing the ball, however, he tried to run it out, was hit by Split End Steve Gauntty, fumbled and Waddy recovered for the Buffs at the Cowboy one-yard line. Controversy then arose when Knappe fumbled the snap and OSU Cornerback Milt Kurven picked it up and took off. The officials, however, ruled that the ball was dead before Kurven recovered it. On the next play Fullback Jim Kelleher crinkled over for his second touchdowns and a 13-10 Colorado lead. OSU Quarterback Charlie Weatherbe tried to catch up with passes, but after two fell incomplete, his third was intercepted by Tackle Frank Patrick who returned 25 yards for another touchdown.

After Ohio State's 30-20 victory over Wisconsin, Woody Hayes was sweetness and light at his postgame press conference. For a while, that is. Then a student reporter asked Hayes, "What do you say to the critics who claim that this Ohio State team isn't as good as those of the past?" Woody said him.

In other Big Ten action, Minnesota improved its record to 5-1 by holding off a late Michigan State rally for a 14-10 triumph. Illinois ended a three-game losing streak by beating Purdue 21-17 in the last minute and Indiana evened its record at 3-3 with a 14-7 victory over Iowa.

Note Dame posted its third shutout of the season in routing Oregon 41-0 as Al Hunter rushed for three touchdowns. The Irish have now yielded just two field goals since their season-opening loss to Pittsburgh.

In other games, Western Michigan knocked off Toledo 34-21, Bowling Green nipped Kent State 17-13 and Ohio U. handed Miami of Ohio its sixth straight loss 28-14.

1. MICHIGAN (6-0)

2. NEBRASKA (5-0-1) 3. OKLAHOMA (5-0-1)

SOUTHWEST

An ill wind for Baylor helped Texas A&M's Tony Franklin twice break the NCAA field-goal record of 63 yards at College Station, Texas. With a 16-mph breeze at his back, the 5' 10", 170-pound barefoot soccer-spynter lucked field goals of 64 and 65 yards as A&M handed Baylor its first defeat, 24-0.

Franklin, who now has kicked 21 field goals in two seasons, connected on his 65-yard

continued

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And that, in case you were wondering, is where we come in.

When EF Hutton talks, people listen.

in the third quarter when the ball cleared the crossbar with five yards to spare.

In point of fact, Franklin's heroic feat of foot did not qualify as a collegiate record, even for the afternoon. That honor already had accrued to Abilene Christian's Ove Johansson, a cousin of the former world heavyweight boxing champion, in Dallas.

That's where Johansson, who also is a soccer-style kicker, booted a 69-yard field goal to help blank, if not stun, East Texas State 17-0. Johansson's luck, which also got a boost from a 16-mph wind, shattered the old NAIA record of 62 yards by Hillsdale's Chester Marcol, now with the Green Bay Packers.

Boyle saw his four-game win streak snapped as A&M, boasting the nation's No. 1 defense, intercepted three passes and recovered a fumble to set up the first three scores. Limited to 194 yards total offense, Boyle never got closer to the Aggie end zone than the 14-yard line.

Aggie Quarterback David Walker completed six of 11 passes for 79 yards and a 15-yard scoring toss to Tight End Gary Haack while freshman Curtis Dickey, who picked up 85 yards on 17 carries, scored the last touchdown on a 35-yard run. In addition to his lengthier shot, Franklin opened the scoring by kicking a 24-yard field goal.

Rice Quarterback Tommy Kramer entered the Texas Tech game as the nation's leading passer and finished it much the worse for the experience. The Red Raiders, now the only unbeaten team in the Southwest Conference, intercepted Kramer three times en route to a 37-13 victory, a record 473 yards total offense and their best start since 1941.

SMU Coach Ron Meyer told his team beforehand that the only chance of beating Houston was to perform without error. The Mustangs apparently didn't listen. They went into the Cotton Bowl and suffered five pass interceptions, eight penalties and a lost fumble before losing 29-6. Nor did the Mustangs profit from using the shotgun formation, borrowed from the neighboring Dallas Cowboys. The first time they used it, SMU Center Harris Brownie snapped the ball into the end zone for a Houston safety.

The Houston victory was its third in three Southwest Conference games but an occasion of tragedy for Cougar Split End Art Briles. Briles' parents were killed en route to the game when their car ran head-on into a truck.

Both Texas and Arkansas had the week off

yards, scored three touchdowns, rushed for 227 yards and took the pressure off Tom Yewcic's first start at quarterback in what Coach Johnny Majors called, "The greatest day for any back I've ever seen."

Yewcic, a walk-on senior and former ninth-stringer promoted to starter when injuries sidelined Bob Haygood and Matt Cavanaugh, had participated in only one college game—against Louisville last week when he played one half—before meeting Miami. In leading the unbeaten Panthers to their sixth victory, however, he completed two of seven passes, including a 40-yard screen to Dorsett for his first touchdown loss.

In addition to the screen pass, which gave Pitt a 24-0 lead seven seconds before halftime, Dorsett scored on a 53-yard sweep and a three-yard smash over tackle.

With five games remaining in his career, Dorsett has accumulated 5,026 yards rushing in four varsity seasons. The total is only 151 yards short of Archie Griffin's record of 5,177 set at Ohio State from 1972 to 1975. Dorsett should shatter the record this week when Pitt meets Navy.

Boston College improved its record to 4-1 with a 14-3 triumph over West Virginia, but Alumni Stadium fans grouched over the Eagles' ultra-conservative offense. BC Quarterback O'Brien completed all the passes he threw—both of them—and the rest of the Eagles' act was a study in grind-it-out football.

In defense of BC Coach Joe Yukica, it may be noted that the Mountaineers passed 35 times and had five interceptions by BC defenders. Defensive Back Kelly Elias, son of former Navy Coach Bill Elias, picked off three passes, and a 27-yard runback with his first theft set up the initial touchdown 1:27 into the game.

Penn State's alternating tailbacks, junior Steve Geise and freshman Mike Guman, combined for 186 yards and three touchdowns as the Nittany Lions squared their record at 3-3 with a 27-3 conquest of Syracuse. Geise rushed for 98 yards, including a 27-yard scoring dash and Guman scored twice on short line plunges in gaining 88 yards.

Rutgers extended the nation's longest winning streak to 13 games with a 28-21 victory over fleshy Lehigh. Linebacker Jim Hughes scored the game-winning touchdown with six minutes left on a 26-yard interception return.

Brown remained atop the Ivy League standings with a 28-12 victory over Cornell as Quarterback Paul Michalko directed four scoring drives and scored once himself on a 13-yard run. The win raised Brown's record to 4-1 overall and 3-1 in the league.

Harvard stopped a rally and ruined a Homecoming at Dartmouth, where the Crimson nailed a 17-10 victory after tackling Quarterback Kevin Case on the Harvard three-yard line as time ran out. Harvard Quarterback Jim Kubacki staked his team to an early lead with a 49-yard touchdown pass

to Halfback Bob Kinchen before scoring himself on a one-yard keeper. Yale had an easier time as John Pagliaro rushed for 118 yards and scored three touchdowns in a 37-6 rout of injury-ridden Columbia. Mike Southworth aided the Eli cause with 106 yards on 11 carries. Colgate remained unbeaten with a 17-7 triumph over Princeton as reserve Fullback Bruce Malvery scored twice in the fourth quarter, and Penn eked out a 15-14 win over Lafayette when Quarterback Bob Grawstein completed two long passes late in the game to set up Johnny Maroon's one-yard winning touchdown smash.

In other games, Villanova played Delaware to a 24-24 tie and Navy suffered its first loss in bowing to William and Mary 21-13.

1. PITTSBURGH (6-0)

2. RUTGERS (6-0) 3. BOSTON COLLEGE (4-1)

WEST Washington State Coach Jackie Sherrill is only seven months older than Terry Donahue, his 32-year-old UCLA counterpart who looks more like one of his players than the Bruins' head man.

After last Saturday night in Los Angeles Coliseum, however, Sherrill may have aged enough to qualify for a Medicare check. In a Pac 8 Conference matchup marked by UCLA offense and WSU's offenses, the Bruins slaughtered the Cougars 62-3 to remain undefeated and unworried about slow starts.

Before the WSU game, UCLA had yet to score a first-quarter touchdown, but in a matter of 11 minutes and 18 seconds after the opening kickoff the Bruins had a 28-0 lead and a lock on their fifth victory.

"In the first quarter," said Brian Quarterback Jeff Dankworth, "they stayed with a man-to-man defense. That means they didn't have much respect for our passing game. Any time you play Wally Henry man to man, you're telling us, 'O.K. throw deep. We don't care. We don't think you can hit it.'"

Dankworth not only hit Henry with a 33-yard scoring pass, he also teamed with Don Pederson on a 10-yard touchdown toss and scored twice himself on short runs.

There remained some question as to whose passing attack, the Bruins' or the Cougars', hurt WSU more. UCLA defenders intercepted Jack Thompson, the leading Pac 8 passer, four times including one which Linebacker Jerry Robinson returned 72 yards for the Bruins' third touchdown.

San Jose State virtually insured itself a second Pacific Coast Athletic Association title by routing Long Beach State 34-7, thus ending the 49ers' win streak at 10 games. Indeed, the 49ers never would have been in the game if Spartan Coach Lynn Siles hadn't decided to go for a first down on fourth and inches at his own 27-yard line. San Jose led 20-0 with 10 minutes left at the time but when the Spartans missed, it took Long Beach only four plays to score its touchdown. The Spartans

continued

1. TEXAS TECH (4-0) 2. TEXAS (2-1-1) 3. HOUSTON (4-1)

EAST Pittsburgh fans who swear Tony Dorsett can do everything and then some had cause for even louder raves in the wake of Pitt's 36-19 victory over Miami of Florida. Dorsett, the Heisman Trophy candidate who became the second major-college player to carry for more than 5,000 career

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turned two of their five pass interceptions into touchdowns during a 19-second span late in the game to save Stiles from explaining his gamble. Tailback Rick Kane led the offense by rushing for 105 yards and two touchdowns.

San Diego State beat Pacific, 21-15, for the 11th straight time on a play the Aztecs would like to think was more than just lucky. Trailing 15-14 with 2½ minutes to play, Quarterback Pete Tereschuk threw the ball into a crowd at the San Diego 45-yard line. His pass bounced off two UOP defenders and into the hands of Ron Smith, who sped the last 55 yards on an 81-yard scoring play.

In other Pac 8 games Quarterback Guy Benjamin led Stanford to a 34-28 triumph over Washington when he passed for 270 yards and a touchdown and ran for two others. Oregon State had its first victory, a 10-9 upset of California, as James Fields scored a touchdown with 3:23 left at Corvallis.

In other games Colorado State shot down Air Force 27-3, Fullerton State routed Santa Clara 58-14, Utah State got its first win over Utah 28-17, Brigham Young manhandled Southern Mississippi 63-19 and Arizona State won for the first time, by beating UTEP 23-6. USC was idle.

1. UCLA (5-0-1)

2. USC (4-1) 3. WYOMING (5-1)

SOUTH Few coaches have greater loyalty to former associates than Bear Bryant. Ironically, the Bear may have cost one of his favorite pupils his job Sunday in a televised drama from Knoxville. That's where Alabama scored a 20-13 victory over Tennessee, coached by the embattled Bill Battle.

It was the Crimson Tide's sixth straight win over the Volunteers and a crushing blow to Battle's waning job security, now that Tennessee has a 3-3 record. "I don't know anything about what the situation is at Tennessee," Bryant said after the game, "but I do know that he's a heckuva coach."

The Tide, improving its record to 4-2, got its winning touchdown with less than six minutes left when Calvin Culver bolted in from the seven-yard line. Alabama had gambled and lost on fourth down at the Volunteer one earlier, but the Tide defense kept Tennessee deep in its own territory to set up the final scoring march.

Because the game was televised, scalpers were stuck with excess tickets and were selling them for \$1 each at kickoff time. Whether Battle saves his scalp remains to be seen.

Bowl scouts who came to see LSU went home wishing they had saved their plane fare after the Tigers fell inelegantly to Kentucky 21-7. As the Southeast Conference's leading spoiler, Kentucky remained unbeaten at home and almost shut out an LSU offense that entered the game averaging 24 points.

Kicking-game prowess kept injury-riddled

continued

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL *continued*

Maryland unbeaten. The Terps eked out a 17-15 triumph over Wake Forest when Kenny Roy blocked a field goal to set up Mike Sochko's 27-yarder with 2:56 to go. Maryland's 17th straight Atlantic Coast Conference victory was achieved without Tailback Steve Atkins, who was out with a bad knee.

Mississippi State fumbled only five times to seven for Memphis State and thus came back from a 27-21 halftime deficit for a 42-33 win. Mississippi State rushed for 418 yards and now boasts a 5-1 record.

North Carolina State used a reverse tactic, building a 21-0 lead in the first half and hanging on for a 21-13 victory over North Carolina. It was the Wolfpack's second win and Carolina's second loss.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

OFFENSE: Iowa State Tailback Dexter Green, a 5'9", 174-pound sophomore, scored two touchdowns and rushed for 214 yards on 37 carries to spark the Cyclones to a 21-17 upset over unpredictable Missouri.

DEFENSE: Oklahoma Linebacker Otis Moore, a 6-foot, 212-pound junior, recovered three fumbles to set up two touchdowns and made seven unassisted tackles to lead the Sooner defense in a 28-10 win over Kansas.

At Columbia, S.C., Ron Bass threw the winning touchdown pass in South Carolina's 10-7 upset of Ole Miss, but it wasn't his biggest thrill of the night. "I enjoyed watching our defense play more than I enjoyed playing," Bass said.

Bass threw an eight-yard scoring pass to Clarence Williams, but the key play of the game generated controversy. It came about when Rebel Halfback Reg Woudard took a pre-chout nine yards and was hit at the goal line, where he fumbled the ball to SC Defensive Back Bill Currier. The Rebels felt Woudard had scored but an official said, "The runner never had possession of the ball."

Defense also enabled Florida to preserve its 33-26 thriller over Florida State. On the next to last play of the game Alvin Parrish batted down an FSU pass in the end zone.

Vince Fusco kicked six field goals to tie an NCAA record and help Duke tie Clemson 18-18. Fusco's footwork equaled the mark set in 1965 by Princeton's Charlie Gogolak and matched in 1972 by Frank Nester of West Virginia.

In other games, Georgia Tech spanked Auburn 28-10, Georgia routed Vanderbilt 45-0, Tulane downed Army 23-10, Citadel beat Richmond 20-7 and Virginia extended the nation's longest losing streak to 15 games by edging Virginia Tech 14-10.

1. MARYLAND (6-0)

2. GEORGIA (5-1) 3. FLORIDA (4-1)

A full-page photograph of two young men celebrating a tennis victory. The man on the left, wearing a white polo shirt and shorts, holds a large silver trophy with both hands and has a wide, joyful smile. The man on the right, wearing a white polo shirt under a dark jacket and shorts, has his arm around the first man's shoulder and is also smiling broadly. He holds a tennis racket in his left hand. The background is a blurred outdoor setting, likely a tennis court.

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(1) The 1976 Ford Pinto Pony beat the 1976 Datsun 600 in all tests.

(2) The 1976 Ford Pinto Pony beat the 1976 Toyota Corolla in all tests.

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The NFL's Game of the Week was played in Tampa last Sunday, where the winless Seattle Seahawks and the winless Tampa Bay Buccaneers clashed in Expansion Bowl I. "Hopefully, one of us is going to win," said Seattle Coach Jack Patera. "I'm sure both of us can't lose." Then Patera turned serious. "This game means that one of us won't go through the season without a win." Or as Tampa Bay Quarterback Steve Spurrier put it, "Nobody wants to be known as the worst, and certainly the loser of this game will be the worst."

Unfortunately for Spurrier, Tampa Bay won that honor by losing to Seattle 13-10. Naturally, the loss did not come easily. In fact, it appeared that the Bucs would force an overtime—and maybe even an ultimate standoff—as Dave Green lined up a dead-on 35-yard field-goal attempt in the final minute. But Seattle's Mike Curtis appeared from nowhere and blocked the ball. "It was perfect, it was fast," Green said of the snap and placement, "but nobody touched the guy. I can't block them myself."

The contest lived up to every expectation. It was terrible. The officials displayed the best offense, walking off a total of 310 yards while Tampa Bay managed 285 and Seattle only 253. Forty-one penalties were called in all, and 35 were accepted—the most in the NFL in 25 years and just two short of the league record. Offensive holding was charged 16 times. "I guess the officials wanted to make this look like the Mistake Bowl," said Tampa Bay Defensive End Council Rudolph. "It was a travesty," said teammate Pat Toomay. "The officials made us look like a bunch of idiots."

Still, the Buccaneers had something to cheer about: they scored their first "home" touchdown of the year and their first "passing" touchdown in history, all on the same play. Even that didn't come easily. Seattle led 13-3 at the time, and when Tampa Bay's Louis Carter seemed to be stopped just shy of the goal line, he two-handed a basketball-style pass to Wide Receiver Morris Owens, who was standing away from the commotion. Owens stared at the football in obvious disbelief, then recovered from the shock and stepped into the end zone. So much for history in Tampa.

Yes, we now have a winner

VICTORY IN EXPANSION BOWL I WENT TO THE SEAHAWKS AS THEY BLOCKED TAMPA BAY'S FIELD-GOAL ATTEMPT IN THE CLOSING SECONDS AND ESCAPED, 13-10



LIKE MOST BUCCANEER PLAYS, THIS SPURRIER PASS TO ESSEX JOHNSON DID NOT WORK

Curtis, of course, helped make history for Seattle. "I was afraid of the overtime," he said. "I didn't think I could play anymore." Indeed, the 43,812 fans—27,588 short of capacity—probably could not have taken any more, although they undoubtedly did not expect very much in the first place.

Before the game Tampa Bay had the AFC's worst offense. Seattle the NFC's worst defense. The Seahawks had allowed their opponents more than 400 yards and 30 points a game. However, the Buccaneers had been shut out in three of their five games, and after one of those whitewashes, the opponent, Cincinnati, was so biased that it didn't even bother to award any game balls. The Bucs did not cross the goal line until their fourth game, and then it was a defensive player, Cornerback Danny Reece, who scored the touchdown, returning a fumble 44 yards. In a lopsided loss to Baltimore, the Buccaneers gained an average of just 1.9

yards per play. In other words, if you gave Tampa Bay the ball for five straight plays, it would be sixth and one.

All this ineptness has proved very embarrassing to the two coaches. Patera spent 13 seasons as a defensive assistant in the NFL, and helped build Minnesota's Purple People Eaters, while John McKay used offensive innovations and flamboyance to gain fame and four national championships at USC. McKay's offensive woes have made him an inviting target for critics, who recall his penchant for belittling the notion that the pro game is more sophisticated and complicated than the college version. Before the Seahawk game, McKay surprised some writers with his humility. He called his new experience "painful and humbling," and added, "If we're not making progress in our third year, I'll tell our owner that he made a terrible error in me."

Nevertheless, the Bucs' offensive lapses have provided McKay with new ma-

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GENERAL ELECTRIC

PRO FOOTBALL continued

terial for his role as a stand-up comic. At a luncheon in Tampa last week he delivered these samples:

- "I thought all along we were going to win 14 games. Right after the opening kickoff I said, 'Well I'll be damned.'"
- "I've told our players, 'Let's have fun' (pause) They took me literally."
- "Mr. [Hugh] Culverhouse has been a great owner. He hasn't come to the dressing room yet to give me any suggestions. Well, I need some advice. I called the Baltimore owner but he was busy."

McKay's offensive coordinator, Johnny Rauch, resigned early last week, and McKay announced that he would assume Rauch's duties and also call plays for Spurrier. "I never had an offensive coordinator before," he said, "but I found out you're supposed to call someone that in the big leagues." In another move the Bucs signed former Pittsburgh Quarterback Terry Hanratty, but he was not activated for the Seattle game.

Unlike Tampa Bay, Seattle has had no quarterbacking problems. In the Seahawks' opening exhibition game, free agent Jim Zorn, a 23-year-old leftbender from Cal Poly, played the second half and brought them from a 24-0 deficit to within two yards of a tie, scrambling to just shy of the goal line on the game's final play as Seattle lost to San Francisco 27-20. Zorn has been No. 1 ever since, and now ranks first in the NFL in pass attempts, averaging almost 35 a game, and second in the NFC in passing yardage. "We're not trying to live by the pass," says Jerry Rhone, who coaches Seattle's quarterbacks and receivers, "we're just trying to live. I don't know anyone who can set up quicker or release quicker than Jim. He can really get rid of the ball. Sometimes he doesn't get it to the right place, but he can get rid of it." The 6' 2", 200-pound Zorn has not had exceptional pass protection, and, as a result, has had to scramble for his life on occasion. Before the Tampa Bay game, he was tied for the team lead in rushing.

In the rabbit vocabulary of the book *Watership Down*, "zorn" means, perhaps fittingly, "all is lost." When told this, Zorn replied that in German his name means "anger." But Zorn is neither lost nor angry, and his name is no mystery around the NFL. He almost made the Dallas Cowboys last year, and was cut only two days before the season began when the Cowboys had to make room for Running Back Preston Pearson. The

continued

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PRO FOOTBALL continued

Rams quickly snapped up Zorn, and although they never officially added him to their roster, they kept him close by all year. The Seahawks outbid several clubs for his services last winter.

Zorn appends "1 Corinthians 1:31" to his autographs. The verse "Who ever wants to boast must boast of what the Lord has done" seems applicable since Zorn is extremely unassuming. He agrees that his coach should call his plays. "I'm really young, you know," he says. "I don't know situations real well. I'm a little bit inconsistent, maybe because I'm young. I don't know. We'll find out what makes me tick." Zorn insists on polishing his own game shoes, wears the same knee pads he had in high school and drives a yellow Volkswagen with 79,000 miles on it. "I'd like a Porsche but God knows I couldn't handle one," he says. "My priorities would be all wrong. When God thinks I need a Porsche, I'll have a Porsche. He doesn't restrict you from buying one." Does God restrict him from throwing interceptions? "No," says Zorn, who has thrown eight. "He allows that."

Thus far, Zorn's favorite target has been rookie Wide Receiver Steve Largent, who leads the league with 23 receptions after catching three passes against Tampa Bay. Largent is neither big (5' 11", 184 pounds) nor fast, but the Seahawks traded a draft choice to Houston for him at the urging of Rhyme, who coached him at Tulsa.

Unfortunately, the Seahawks are not as blessed with running backs. In fact, Seattle is the only team in the NFL that has rushed for fewer yards than Tampa Bay. Four of the five backs on the Seattle roster were acquired on waivers just before the league opener with St. Louis. For two days that week the Seahawks practiced with just one running back, and at times they had to play the Cardinals with five wide receivers on the field. After that game, a 30-24 loss, Zorn was quizzed about the new players. "We got good play from some of our new people," he said, "particularly running back . . . er . . . er . . . No. 44."

That's the way it is on expansion teams—a lot of confusion and a lot of hope for the future, all taken with a grain of salt. Spurrier probably expressed it best: "We're pretty close to being a good team," he said. Then he thought a second and added, "But right now we're terrible."

PHOTO



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It was weird, unpredictable, disappointing, but the climax of Ed Yost's attempt was entirely in keeping with the tradition of attempted transatlantic crossings. There was Yost and his 80-foot-high, helium-filled balloon gently descending to the sea 200 nautical miles east of the Azores, having drifted 2,520 miles in 107 hours and 35 minutes, while beneath him a Russian ship was trying to outrace a West German freighter and a Portuguese coast guard ship to make the rescue.

Why this almost comic finale to Yost's grand adventure? Purely a matter of economics. After another Russian ship picked up Karl Thomas when he ditched in the North Atlantic earlier this summer, Thomas reportedly received a bill for \$100,000.

Forty-eight hours after the *Elisabeth* Bofren rescued Yost, and his wallet, from the fast-closing Russians—charging \$5,000 for the ride—he waved a final goodbye to his West German rescuers, struck a heroic pose at the tiller, and steered his red and white gondola, which was being towed by a motor launch, into the harbor beneath the towering Rock of Gibraltar. The sun was bright, the wind was fresh, and the bony little catamaran danced jauntily over the waves. Such was the last mile of the most successful failure in the history of long-distance ballooning.

In all, Yost broke eight world records in four ballooning categories, including all-class endurance and distance records that had stood for more than 60 years. And he did it at low altitude in an open gondola, without help from the jet stream.

None of this surprises those who know the man. Alone among the rash of would-be transatlantic balloonists, the 57-year-old Yost was the one the cognoscenti took seriously. He is the holder of some 20 balloon-related patents, builder of the balloons used in films like *The Great Bank Robbery* and *The Great Race* and a veteran of high-altitude test flights for NASA and the armed services. Thus he is a thoroughgoing professional balloonist, not a dilettante or a publicity seeker.

Yost's professionalism was reflected in every aspect of the transatlantic try. His 60,000-cubic-foot balloon, dubbed the *Silver Fox*, was patterned after the heavy-duty balloons used in the north woods to haul timber down mountain-

Ditching the dream



ED YOST'S NEAR-MISS ATLANTIC CROSSING CAME TO AN END WHEN THE WINDS THAT BUOYED HIS SPIRITS AND HIS CHANCES FOR THREE DAYS TURNED ON HIM

sides. It had been built of neoprene-coated nylon fabric in Yost's own factory in Sioux Falls, S. Dak. Beneath the towering silver and black gas bag, Yost rode in a 13-by-6-foot fiber-glass gondola stuffed with a welter of sophisticated radio gear including a continuously operating radio beacon that gave the balloon's altitude, four VHF voice transceivers (two for ships, two for aircraft), another voice transceiver for ground communications and an emergency locator beacon. Unlike his less meticulously prepared predecessors (five of whom died making the attempt in the past six years), Yost was in contact with tracking stations in Washington and London every two or three hours. "There weren't five

minutes in the entire trip when I couldn't contact somebody," he says.

Also crammed into the tiny catamaran-style, buoyant gondola were food, foul-weather gear, automatic trim-adjusting equipment, sleeping bags, water, cameras, two stoves and ballast: 250 pounds of BB shot in five-pound bags, another 58 pounds of sand in small bags and approximately 20 grapefruit-size rocks picked up at the last minute from the shore near his Milbridge, Maine take-off point. Almost every item on board had been marked as to its weight, one exception being a toy mouse given to Yost by a Milbridge youngster shortly before takeoff. The fruit of 16 months' preparation, the *Silver Fox* had cost Yost

continued



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BALLOONING continued

and his backers an estimated \$60,000.

So what went wrong? "Our weather forecasting," Yost says. "You have to forecast five days ahead of time, and I ran into a flow of air that instead of going north or coming straight in, turned clockwise." That unexpected wind current pushed the Silver Fox so far to the south that the attempt had to be abandoned. Had he continued, Yost would have picked up the northeast trade winds and been blown back to South America.

Things went well at first. Yost, wearing slacks, a sport shirt and a windbreaker, left the ground at 6:10 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 5. The Silver Fox drifted off on a northeasterly course that took him over the province of New Brunswick, past the mouth of the St. Lawrence River and out over Newfoundland into the North Atlantic. By Thursday he was some 250 miles east of Gander, about half a day ahead of schedule. Then the winds began blowing him toward the south, and the voyage became frustrating. "The distance between takeoff and landing was 2,520 miles," says Yost, "but the balloon covered many more miles than that. One day I actually went backward. All I could do was sit there and watch it happen."

In fact, he did more than just sit there. "It's not a comfortable ride," he says. "You work all the time. You can't go to sleep for long. Even when I slept I'd set the alarm clock for one hour, and one hour would go by and I'd wake up, check the flight instruments and go back to sleep for another hour. There's always something to do. The first thing I did in the morning was wind the barograph, then check the ballast supply, then get everything set up and laid out for the next evening's sunset (when ballast had to be released to counteract lost lift due to cooling of the gas bag). At about 10 or 11 o'clock I'd try to make radio contact. At noon I'd do a sun shot with a sextant to figure out where I was ... I just kept working all the time." One night the temperature dropped to 18°F. During the day, however, Yost wore normal street clothing. "In the day it's pretty warm," he says. "You're in a calm all the time. Since you're being carried by the wind, there is no relative wind, and the sun is very strong at that altitude."

Yost's diet during the voyage consisted mainly of canned food and fruit juice. He heated water for coffee only once before the stoves went over the side to de-

continued

GM



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MONZA **SPYDER**



crease ballast. "We made a bad mistake when we brought the balloon from South Dakota to Maine," he says. "We put a bunch of mothballs in the balloon box to keep the mice out. Then we put my plastic water bottles on top of the balloon and closed the box. The water tasted like mothballs all the way across. I didn't drink much water."

As the *Silver Fox* was driven inexorably to the south, it became clear that Yost would eventually have to abandon the flight. He finally ditched at about 9 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 10. "We decided on Saturday afternoon that we'd land the next morning at about 9 a.m. so that the ships would have a full day of light in which to pick me up."

Search aircraft found him at about 8 a.m. Sunday and were able to follow him down even though there was rain. After putting out a 700-foot nylon drag line weighing 100 pounds to hold the balloon relatively stationary, Yost went about converting the gondola to a boat by installing rudders and checking to see that

everything was seaworthy. Then he valved the balloon down close to the water. "When I was about four feet off," Yost says, "I pulled the rip panel partially so the balloon would start losing helium and wouldn't be floating off by itself, a derelict." After Yost disconnected the balloon from the gondola, he watched it rise to about 5,000 feet before slowly coming down into the ocean. But despite Yost's precautions, the balloon could not be recovered. Three hours later, as Yost was on the bridge of the *Elisabeth* Borten radioing news of his rescue, the balloon sank. "That was a real loss," he says. "We spent a lot of time and hard work building it, and we probably won't have the patience to build another one."

Still, Yost claims to be satisfied with his flight. "We set out in the beginning to use modern equipment and modern techniques and fabrics to build a balloon that would stay in the air longer than these people who've been going out for about 10 hours, some of them not even getting beyond sight of shore. It would

have been nice to have made land, but what the heck, we were prepared for water and that's where we ended up."

Yet there were some cracks in Yost's wall of satisfaction. He was visibly annoyed with the quality of the weather forecasting he received, some of it contradictory. In ungarded moments, he admitted frustration at being balked by winds at the altitudes he had to maintain during the day while watching the clouds below him moving in the direction he wanted to go.

The annoyance is understandable. World records are fine, but they do not capture the public imagination the way an Atlantic crossing would. Nevertheless, Ed Yost, a throwback to the days when rugged individuals tried to conquer time, mountains and geography just because they were a challenge, can take consolation in small things. On a visit to the gondola the day after landing, a Gibraltar customs agent greeted him, quite sincerely and simply, by asking: "Are you the hero?"

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The wisdom of guys and dolls

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SEATTLE SLEW KNOCKED OFF THE FIELD

His name is Seattle Slew. Can do, can do. The guys say this horse can do. What he did last week was truly remarkable. In only the third start of his life and his first stakes appearance, Seattle Slew drubbed nine other top-rated 2-year-olds in the \$137,250 Champagne at Belmont Park by 9½ lengths, an astonishing margin in such a classy event. Until late last month Seattle Slew was just a rumor, a hope lingering in Barn 60 on the backstretch, but in a 26-day period he has advanced to stardom in a racing year already filled with a heady measure of fine races and performers. If Seattle Slew gets any better than he was on Champagne Day, he may become a folk hero, a national attraction with bumper stickers.

In an era of multimillion-dollar yearlings Seattle Slew comes running in from the dime store. He was bought at a Kentucky auction last year for \$17,500. From there he was sent to a farm in Maryland where the stablehands quickly realized he was basically a clod. His right forehoof paddled outward, and he had so much trouble doing things properly that he soon was nicknamed Baby Huey after the ever-erring character in movie cartoons. Slowly, however, the slew-footed colt got things together, and the laughter on the shed row was replaced by affection. In April, after his first workout at Belmont, the affection was enhanced by optimism. And dreams.

The first fantasy was to have been played out at Saratoga in August when Seattle Slew was to start on the final day of the meeting. But the colt became playful in his stall, injured a hock and had to be withdrawn. Yet word of him was already moving along the backstretch.

That week at Saratoga Jockey Ron Turcotte rode a horse named For the Moment to victory in an allowance event and, after the race, was praising his mount in the jockeys' room. But fellow rider Jean Cruguet told Turcotte, "There is a better 2-year-old than that on the backstretch."

"What's his name?" asked Turcotte.

"I won't tell you," said Cruguet, "because if I do, you will try to get on him yourself."

Cruguet himself rode a very fine 2-year-old named Banquet Table on the final day of Saratoga, winning the \$85,575 Hopeful Stakes, but the French-born jockey remained decidedly silent about his personal choice among the 2-year-olds, the mahogany-colored son of Bold Reasoning.

On Sept. 20 Seattle Slew finally started at Belmont and, because of hot workouts and hot rumors, he was bet down to 5 to 2 in a field of 12. He assumed command at the break and won by five lengths. Fifteen days later Billy Turner, the colt's 36-year-old trainer, entered him in a seven-furlong race. By now word of a wonder animal was all over the track. The public made Seattle Slew the shortest-priced favorite of the meeting, despite the fact that he had drawn the inside post position, the worst at the track. (This fall only 8% of the races at Belmont have been won from the inside post.) Seattle Slew dwelt at the start but then charged to the front and drew off by 3½ lengths. What might he prove next?

"I wanted to run him in the Champagne," Turner said last Saturday evening, "but how often does a horse win the Champagne after only two starts? Then I decided sooner or later he would have to find out that things don't come easy."

Seattle Slew's main opponent in the Champagne was For the Moment, a full brother to Honest Pleasure who had won four of five starts, including a division of the Cowdin Stakes as well as the \$119,255 Fustury at Belmont. Those wins put For the Moment at the head of the 2-year-old class, and already a half-interest in him had been sold by Waldemar Farms to Gerald Robins, a real estate developer in Miami, for half a million dollars.

That made no difference to New York horseplayers. Although eight of the Champagne starters had stakes experi-

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HORSE RACING *continued*

ence, Seattle Slew was sent off as the 6-to-5 favorite. He broke from the gate as if his tail were aflame and barreled ahead. For the Moment took aim at Seattle Slew at the head of the stretch but it was soon apparent he could not close the gap. In fact, Seattle Slew pulled away. He finished the mile event in the stakes record time of 1:34½ with Cruguet easing his mount up.

Each year since 1964 the horse first under the wire in the Champagne has been declared the 2-year-old champion. That honor could now come to Seattle Slew despite only three starts. A strong case can be made for Run Dusty Run, the 2-year-old son of 1970 Kentucky Derby winner Dan Patch. Run Dusty Run has won five of seven starts including the Arlington-Washington Futurity and the Breeders' Stakes at Keeneland; his bankroll is \$231,010 compared to Slew's \$94,350. The two horses will probably not meet this season.

Seattle Slew's owners, Karen and Mickey Taylor, are from White Swan, Wash., about 150 miles from Seattle. Seattle Slew was bought on the advice of Dr. Jim Hill, a Florida veterinarian. "We hoped to come up with a name that would handle both the Northwest and Florida," Hill says. "We tried a lot and most of them were denied by The Jockey Club. A slew is a muddy backwater in Florida." No matter how the name evolved, Seattle Slew is certainly no longer Baby Huey.

Slew is from the first crop of Bold Reasoning, who started only 12 times but won eight races, including the 1971 Withers and Jersey Derby. Cruguet maintains that the colt is the best 2-year-old he has ridden since Holst. The Flag won the 1970 Champagne, only to be disqualified. Last season the Taylors, who have been in racing only four years, had Lexington Laugh finish 10th in the Champagne. Later Lexington Laugh broke down and was destroyed. This Champagne promises a happier, vintage ending.

Secretariat won the Champagne by a modest two lengths, Backpasser by four, Foolish Pleasure by six, Riva Ridge and Honest Pleasure by seven and Never Bend by eight. Seattle Slew has already put on a better show on Champagne Day than some of America's most celebrated thoroughbreds.

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A Celtic rookie Puts it Together

First-year Commissioner Larry O'Brien used his Irish gift of gab to lead the NBA owners into a merger with the ABA

BY RAY KENNEDY





We are a nation of brilliant failures," Oscar Wilde once said of the Irish, "but we are the greatest talkers since the Greeks." Nowhere do the natives wax more rhapsodic than in County Cork, site of Castle Blarney. There, on battlements nearby in Cork Harbor, once the principal port of departure for emigrants venturing to the New World, is the mystic stone which, when kissed, is said to bestow the gift of eloquence and wondrous powers of persuasion.

It is all fanciful legend, of course. Still,...

Talking, always talking, Larry O'Brien rode into Washington, D.C. recently on a white charger. Or so it seemed—one can never be too sure with charmed men. Hailed on the streets and ringed by well-wishers at every turn, the old pol-turned-commissioner of the National Basketball Association was fussed over like a visiting head of state. Even his appearance before the House Select Committee on Professional Sports was more homecoming than hearing; at one point the testimony was interrupted when a late-arriving committee member was unable to contain himself. "Hey, good to see you, Larry!" he blurted.

And it was, except perhaps for die-hardards who might have hoped to hear O'Brien lecturing his old Capitol Hill cronies on the necessity of keeping pro basketball players bound to their clubs by uncut restrictive contracts. That, in fact, is exactly what many people believed would happen when O'Brien was named commissioner last year. After all, they reasoned, why else would the NBA hire such a celebrated lobbyist if not for the purpose of gaining Congressional favor for, say, the league's no-budge stand on the reserve clause. At the time, one owner said, "It may take some arm twisting, but I'll bet old Larry can *continued*

PHOTOGRAPH BY LANE STEWART

pull it all off in one of those cloakroom deals."

Instead, a year later, here was old Larry telling the House committee that the NBA sought "no special privileges." And for good reason: the long-warring players and owners had fashioned their own peace. Professing an optimism "unmatched in recent years," O'Brien told the committee in his best rumbling baritone that "once again the principles of good faith, hard-nosed negotiating and compromise have carried the day." In sum, he said, the focus of the NBA had at last shifted "from the courts of law back to the court of play."

It was a deservedly proud moment for O'Brien. From a state of bitter intractability, facing issues that rattled the very structure of the game, he had led the embattled parties to settlements that other professional sports can—and inevitably must—aspire to.

Consider all that has happened since he took the job in April 1975: the resolution of the Oscar Robertson antitrust suit that could have resulted in devastating damage claims; the signing of a collective-bargaining agreement with the NBA Players Association that is the most progressive in pro sports; a merger with the American Basketball Association that adds four teams and promises exciting new levels of competition. Toss in a new two-year, \$10.5 million TV pact with CBS and enough tough, decisive penalties handed out by O'Brien himself to show who's in charge and, well, let's hear it for Big Larry, rookie sports czar of the year!

O'Brien justice got no complaints from Buffalo Braves Owner Paul Snyder. Four months ago he tried to move his franchise to Miami. "O'Brien blocked it and let me know in no uncertain terms that owning a team is a two-sided deal," says Snyder. "He forced me to face up to my responsibility to the community. And I respect that."

O'Brien's secret? To be sure, the NBA breakthroughs were a joint effort. As the complicated and tedious negotiations ground on, any number of participants could have claimed that week's MVP—Most Valuable Peacemaker—award. As for motivation, the principals needed to look no further than their pockets and the papers. By one estimate, legal fees for just the Oscar Robertson case, which

had already cost the price of a new franchise, would have run to an additional \$6 million if battled to its conclusion. And based on recent trends in both the courts and Congress, that outcome seemed foreordained: for the players, all the way.

Still...

"Without Larry the job never would have gotten done," says William Alverston, president of the Milwaukee Bucks. A self-described "certified hawk" opposing concessions to players and to ABA teams seeking merger, Alverston now says, "Looking back, I don't know how he did it. I don't know, he just seems to have this special gift of persuasion."

For the record, it is true that Lawrence Francis O'Brien, now 59, special assistant to Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, former U.S. Postmaster General, two-time National Chairman of the Democratic Party and the son of County Cork immigrants, has busied the Blarney Stone. Indeed, shortly after his appearance in Washington he left for one of his frequent visits to Ireland to "renew my juices." Mainly, like the ancient Gaelic storytellers who drew sustenance from the myths and musical voices of the land, juice renewal consists of knocking around the countryside, frequenting inns and pubs and, he says, "talking, lots of talking with the people."

Words, lots of words in the form of depictions, accusations, court rulings and agents' demands were ultimately what caused Walter Kennedy, O'Brien's predecessor, to leave the NBA. When Kennedy, a former public relations director for the league, became commissioner in 1963, the NBA consisted of nine teams with hardly a player's agent or a lawsuit to its name.

But toward the end of Kennedy's tenure, like a mounting storm, came the suits, strikes, injunctions, salary wars and cries of "piracy." Kennedy recalls, "Problems that once were solved by a phone call or a shake of hands suddenly required four lawyers, a court stenographer and eight hours of hearings. It was a harrowing experience." Complaining of a "lack of front-office stability" that saw 44 changes of ownership or principals while he was in office, Kennedy announced in 1973 that he would retire two years hence.

In that year, Mike Burke moved down-

town from the New York Yankees and the (then) comparative serenity of American League baseball to the front office of the New York Knicks. He found the contrast between the two operations startling. "Generally, a total lack of order prevailed, with no one to pull it together. League meetings were a mess—everyone talking at once, private conversations going on in the corner, Kennedy pounding his gavel and nobody listening—just chaos."

Typical of the NBA's disordered state was the 21-month search for Kennedy's successor. At one point in 1974, a vote was taken on a pair of candidates, Alan Rothenberg and Henry Steinman, both West Coast lawyers with ties to NBA teams. The owners split into two hopelessly deadlocked factions. "The feeling was," says Milwaukee's Alverston, "that each group was trying to shove their man down the other's throat. We were probably all wrong but it shows you the kind of suspicion that prevailed."

Enter O'Brien, who at the time headed his own management consulting firm in New York. "Things were going along rather well financially, but quite frankly I was bored," he says. "I'd get up each morning, light a cigarette and say to myself, 'Well, what do I do today? Have a long lunch with a friend?'"

One night his answer was to attend a Knack game (he has been a season-ticket holder since 1969) and, met there by Mike Burke, the connection resulted in another question: Did he want to change his life? "No," he said. "I don't think a sport commissioner's job can get the adrenaline flowing."

Nonetheless, a league committee began pursuing O'Brien, and he eventually agreed to read the NBA's constitution and by-laws. "As I looked it over," he says, "I realized that, by God, you weren't fettered as Commissioner, that there is an authority inherent in the office that is wider than in any other sport. There were things you could actually do, decisions you could actually make."

Approved by unanimous vote and signed for three years at \$150,000 per, plus the kind of fringe benefits usually reserved for seven-foot centers with 30-point averages, O'Brien flew to a league meeting in San Francisco to be sworn in and make his first decision. It was a sticky one, not only because of the big money

involved—Philadelphia, which owned the NBA draft rights to George McGinnis, was contesting New York's signing of the ABA superstar for \$3.1 million—but because Burke, the architect of the Knicks' deal, was a close friend.

Bang! After hearing the testimony, O'Brien slammed his gavel and disapproved the Knicks' contract, made them forfeit their first draft choice for 1976 and ordered them to pay Philadelphia's \$100,000 legal fees.

A few minutes later, after being separately summoned to a press conference, O'Brien and Burke encountered one another in a hotel corridor. Passing by, O'Brien said, "Even the round ball takes some funny bounces, doesn't it?"

Burke recalls, "Despite our disappointment, it was clear to me that with that one decisive decision Larry had es-

tablished his authority." Adds Pat Williams, the 76ers general manager, "After handling the Democrats, O'Brien handled that case like it was a shrimp cocktail. It was just beautiful."

Next came the Robertson case. Filed by the all-star guard in 1970 on behalf of all NBA players, the suit contended that the common draft and the option clause, among other things, violated the antitrust laws. Prospects of settlement were bleak. The last attempt at negotiations had come two years earlier when the owners rejected, without bothering to take a vote, a solution worked out by a peace committee. "It was almost like a Vietnam situation," recalls Larry Fleisher, general counsel for the NBA Players Association. "We were all in a up to our necks but no one knew how to get out."

O'Brien's reaction: "I have to get to

the hustings." What he found there was a "biterness and intransigence unlike anything I had ever experienced in all my years in Washington. And let's face it, in Washington we got involved in some very, very hard negotiations. A lot of blood was spilled on the floor, a lot of wounds were inflicted, but afterward there was no meanness.

"I remember sitting with Charlie Halleck, the House minority leader, in his hideaway in the Capitol and having a martini. And he'd say, 'O.K., O'Brien, tomorrow is a biggie. What's your head count?' And I'd say, 'Well, I won't give you the numbers but I bet you we beat you by more than 12 votes.' It was like working with a point spread. And then we'd hit the floor and it would be like the NBA finals. We'd almost always win, but never afterward was there any bit-

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O'Brien continued

teness. We'd just shake hands and say, 'O.K., fellas, let's try it again.'

"That's why I wasn't sympathetic when I came into this new climate where everyone had their feet in concrete and were suing the hell out of each other. I didn't like it and I was damned if I was going to accept it."

O'Brien arranged a series of meetings between the owners and players and, he says, right in the middle of some heavy prodding, cajoling and shoving, it suddenly hit him: "My God, I've been here before. Except for the bitterness, this situation is exactly like the ones I faced in Washington."

After one particularly unyielding session in New York's Plaza Hotel last January, O'Brien summoned the owners to his room. "When I was in Washington," he lectured them, "there was never a single piece of legislation returned to the President's desk intact. In other words, the art of the possible is the art of compromise. I've never foreclosed on that belief in my life, and if I have to do it now there is no point in my continuing as commissioner. It wouldn't be the end of the world for me. I didn't seek the job. I don't owe anybody anything. And if quitting is what it takes, I'll do it."

"What you have to understand is that professional sports are an integral part of the American system. They can't be separated out. And just as there are many problems in a changing society that must be reconciled, so, too, are there in sports. Gentlemen, we all know there has been a great deal of ferment in this land. We're not immune from that change but part of it. You just can't ignore the quest of Americans for rights long denied."

Pausing, O'Brien then recalled a time in the Oval Office when Lyndon Johnson was considering what he might do about some antiwar protesters in front of the White House. Finally, he dismissed them as just a bunch of misguided youths who would go away. "You've got to read the message in the wind," O'Brien told the owners. "and if you don't, I'm not with you. I'm not going to get involved in anything that is not part of the American way of life."

"For Chrissake, we're no different than anyone else. We've got to prove ourselves. C'mon, let's see if we can do it."

And so they did, forging compromises that paved the way for the merger with

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O'Brien continued

the ABA five months later. For some owners the effect has been downright liberating. "For the first time in my memory," reports Buffalo's Paul Snyder, "the press and the people are talking about the team, the players and how good they'll be. They're talking basketball. Before, all we heard about was who's suing who this week. It's wonderful."

Off and on, O'Brien has done his share of talking basketball as well. Sometimes at football games, of all places. Jack Kent Cooke, owner of the Los Angeles Lakers, recalls, "One day some years ago Larry and I attended a Washington Redskins game together. During the half we were kidding around and I asked him, 'If you had your druthers, what would be the one thing in the world you would want to be?' And he said, 'I'd like to own the Boston Celtics.' Now, at the time, he was Postmaster General, so that illustrates a latent basketball interest."

And an odd turn of fate as well, since basketball and O'Brien were both born in the same town, Springfield, Mass. "Just coincidence," he says. "I don't lay claim to anything coming down from the heavens." Though the gym where Dr. James Naismith tucked up his peach baskets has long since given way to a shopping center, the street of Victorian rooming houses on which O'Brien was raised was recently refurbished and declared a historic site—though for reasons having nothing to do with him. When he went back to attend the dedication ceremonies this past summer, the local press heralded it as the return of the Mattoon Street Gunner.

Seems that in his playing days as a chunky forward with a fiery red brush cut and failing eyesight, O'Brien was known to fire away at will. From half court. One-handed. All the time.

That tendency foreshortened his career with the Cathedral High Purple Panthers but did not stop him from launching his ICBMs at the YMCA on the corner of Mattoon Street. "I'd go to the Y at eight in the morning and stay in there throwing it up until I starved to death," says O'Brien. Near closing time he would sometimes hide under the Y pool table and then, when everything was locked up, turn the lights back on and keep gunning away. "I was nuts for it," he says.

Later on he attached himself emotion-

ally to the Boston Celtics, often driving the 200-mile round trip with friends to see a game. "There was no Massachusetts Turnpike then," he says, "so we'd strike out on the icy roads, watch Cousy and Macauley win another one, and then get home at 4 a.m. and think nothing of it." For away games he would get in his car and drive around town until he found the best spot for pecking up the action on the car radio. "Oh, I tell you, I was a fan," he says.

O'Brien was also and always a pot. As a boy he had accompanied his father, a rooming-house operator and Democratic organizer, on door-to-door canvassing through the poorer sections of Springfield. Once, as they trudged along together, the elder O'Brien said something his son never forgot: "The votes are here, Larry, if we can only get them out."

Both Larry Sr.—or the Old Red Fox as he was known in the wards—and his wife Myra Sweney O'Brien, who had worked as a domestic in Springfield before they were married, had come to the U.S. from County Cork in the wake of the potato famine. Inevitably, they encountered and resented the Yankee-bred hostility toward immigrants and the NO IRISH NEED APPLY signs on the factory gates. "My father ran into bigotry," says Larry. "It made him a strong Democrat. It was one place for him to go. He wasn't wanted elsewhere. It was the old story of the Irish immigrant becoming a citizen, a first voter and a politician at the same time. I can remember my father coming back home from the '24 election convention. He brought us hats in the shape of teapots."

Along with the rooming house the family also ran a poolroom and O'Brien's Cafe and Restaurant. Myra O'Brien did the cooking—her clam chowder, beef stew and soda bread were locally renowned—and Larry did the hustling, standing on a Coke box at age 10 and taking on all comers at eight ball. At home the O'Brien kitchen became a political hotbed where such luminaries as Boston Mayor James Michael Curley and U.S. Senator David Ignatius Walsh held forth. In rapt wonder, Larry listened as they carried on like IRA conspirators. Not surprisingly, in high school his chief interest was debating, which he pursued with a flair that would have made Curley, his hero and the flamboyant

archetype of *The Last Hurrah*, proud O'Brien recalls, "Our kitchen used to be the place where some of the boys would meet, and my father would say, 'All right, now we'll get the signatures.' It was organizational politics, signatures on petitions, door-to-door canvassing. He was a great planner—all the things I would up being involved in myself."

While working at night toward his law degree from the local branch of Northwestern University, he tended the mahogany bar at O'Brien's Cafe by day, chinning for hours with ward heelers and candidates of every stripe. Clearly, lobbying and not law was his passion, and at 22 he became the chairman of his local ward and president of the Hotel & Restaurant Employees Union. As a neighborhood saying put it, when it came to getting out the vote young Larry O'Brien "could talk a dog off a meat wagon."

As it turned out, the union job was the only elective office O'Brien ever ran for, an ironic turn for the man Jack Kennedy called "the best election man in the business."

Their alliance began in 1951, when O'Brien organized Massachusetts for Kennedy, who was making his first bid for the Senate. Then 33, the same age as Kennedy, O'Brien was a well-spring of political innovations. Things, little things, like teas and Christmas cards and telephone campaigns became his vehicles for shaping big events. And always he followed his No. 1 political dictum: there's nothing like ringing a doorbell.

It was "dog work," he once confessed, but as detailed in a 70-page handbook called O'Brien's Manual, it became the electioneer's bible. In recent years everyone from Barry Goldwater to former British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos has employed the O'Brien method. Goldwater may have missed the main thrust of the manual when he used it for his unsuccessful 1964 Presidential campaign, O'Brien sums it up thusly: "Keep it simple, avoid the slick, and work like hell."

How well the O'Brien approach works was first demonstrated when Kennedy won the Senate seat in 1952, upsetting the initial heavy favorite, Henry Cabot Lodge. And then it was on to the White House, ringing doorbells all the way, and

the heady days of the New Frontier. Along the way O'Brien picked up enough material to pen a bestseller. Patriarch Joseph Kennedy, for example, passed on some sage advice about how to keep from being unduly influenced by prestigious people in or out of politics: "Whenever you're dealing with someone important to you," the old man said, "picture him sitting there in a suit of long red underwear."

As for influence peddling, O'Brien learned early on that it helps to see things from another man's point of view, even if the other man happens to be a hedge-bound NBA owner. Once, when stumping for Kennedy in the back hills of West Virginia, O'Brien began wooing a local leader with his usual pitch for a New America. The man listened for a while and then said bluntly: "I'm not interested in the White House. I'm interested in the courthouse."

Such lessons have taught O'Brien to be a realist. He doubts there ever was a Camelot, at least not in his terms. "I don't know what I'm doing with this crowd," he once said of the Kennedy clan. "I don't even fit the pattern. I didn't go to Harvard. I don't play touch football. In sports, I am pretty much of a spectator."

Burdened by 20/400 eyesight and a complexion that turns red as quickly as a stoplight if he lingers in the sun too long, O'Brien is no outdoorsman. Or as one friend put it, "Larry's not the kind of guy you'd throw into the swimming pool." Jackie Kennedy understood. No great slotback herself, she preferred to sit in the shade with O'Brien during all those Hyannis football games. In return, on the campaign trail, where she did not think she should be seen smoking in public, Larry would sneak her a few furtive puffs every now and then.

Back scratching: that is what O'Brien became a master at when he served as Presidential liaison man with Congress. He was described as having the "most whispered-in ear in Washington." The messages he carried to and from the White House opened a bridge of communication that made him one of the most effective power brokers ever on the Hill. In 1965, for instance, he helped push into law 68% of President Johnson's legislative proposals, which is akin to averaging 68 points a game in the NBA. From half court.

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O'Brien continued

"Every day, every hour, it was drive, drive, drive—to use the basketball term, a full-court press." O'Brien recalls. Though, many days, that meant juggling up to 125 phone calls and subsisting on three packs of cigarettes and a Niagara of black coffee, he would not have had it any other way.

Part of the fun was seeing men of great power sitting before him, so to speak, in their long red underwear. One long-running skit was Lady Bird Johnson's attempts to police LBJ's diet. Not only did he keep a box of pralines, his weakness, stashed under his White House bed, but once, when O'Brien accompanied him to a Washington Senators Opening Day game, the President took to wolfing down hot dogs in a crouching position for fear that Lady Bird might spot his indiscretion on TV.

Ah, politics. Does O'Brien miss it? You bet your sweet head count he does. One friend confides, "If Larry were offered the right kind of deal in Washington, he'd go back in a flash." O'Brien disagrees, of course, explaining that "the only good job down there is the Senate, and I've never been convinced that I'm electable." Though twice mentioned as a prospect for the Vice Presidency as well as for a Senate seat, O'Brien suspects that "perhaps I lack the necessary ego for office seeking. I've never felt that my holding public office was essential to the Republic."

No matter. In a Presidential election year such as this, it is certain that a man of O'Brien's vast experience has been tapped on an informal basis. Indeed, he has been in contact with Jimmy Carter at the candidate's request and, as he says, "a line of dialogue goes on." How extensive it is, is anybody's guess; O'Brien is understandably evasive on the subject, saying only that "I don't want to give the impression that I've closed the door on my past."

That a new political era might slowly be closing out Larry O'Brien the commissioner was a thought that came to mind when the Democratic National Convention was held in New York this summer, right at the foot of O'Brien's 20th-floor office in the Madison Square Garden complex. At one point, while involved in negotiating the final details of the ABA merger, he looked out the window at the delegates streaming into

continued

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O'Brien *continued*

the Garden to the strains of *Happy Days*. "New ball game," he said.

When O'Brien left Washington after chairing the 1972 Democratic National Convention, it was said that the enemies he left behind could meet in a phone booth. Now he says, "I'm not sure how many friends I have anymore in high places in Washington. A lot of people who were once in Washington aren't there now. And I'm not sure they were my friends in the first place."

Partly, that is a twinge of regret stemming from the fact that as the Democratic National Chairman he was the target of the Watergate break-ins, an experience that, he says, "depressed me a great deal because of the harm it did to the public acceptance of our system. What we once called apathy has become cynicism." To counteract "the crisis of truth," he has lately been preaching the virtues of "leveling with the people," a theme he sounded again and again when he was refereeing the NBA negotiations. If Larry O'Brien succeeds it is because he is, by all accounts, a decent man.

Pronouncing his first year as NBA commissioner "an exciting, fast-paced experience," O'Brien says he appreciates it all the more because it helped wash away the Watergate gloom. "Now I'm on the inside of the papers," he says with some relief, "instead of on the front page."

New York suits O'Brien just fine. He has been a theater buff ever since the days when vaudeville troupes used to line up at O'Brien's Cafe for his mother's beef stew. As often as possible, after dinner at Sardi's or Toots Shor's, he and his wife Elva take in a Broadway show, any show. "I can't stand a bad movie," O'Brien says, "but I will sit through almost any play, no matter how inept. If the script is poor, I'm content to study the actors. I've always been fascinated by the similarity between actors and politicians."

Try as he may, O'Brien cannot seem to convince his Washington friends that it is the human element that has made his transition to the NBA so satisfying. People keep asking him, he says, "How do you get up for it? How, after being involved in some of the most meaningful and far-reaching social legislation probably in history, do you get up for basketball?" I tell them, frankly, I feel right at home. This position offers all the chal-

continued

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O'Brien continued

lenges and responsibility I sought. Hell, the human element is always present."

Except, say, when Dr. J goes one-on-one with Rick Barry. That promises to be superhuman as do some of the other matchups with former ABA stars this season. "It's sort of horizons unlimited for us," says O'Brien. If so, is it also possible that he has been too successful for his own good? After all, without a legal hassle to straighten out, how is he going to keep the old adrenaline coursing?

"It's true," O'Brien says, "our new agreement with the players is a quantum jump forward. But that's just the beginning. What we've secured are the tools for management to operate. Now we have to implement them, franchise by franchise. There is a lot of uncharted water ahead. We won't be idle."

Harry Truman once said that a President spent most of his time trying to persuade others to do things they ought to do without any persuasion. Perhaps O'Brien's greatest contribution as a rookie commissioner is that he has persuaded others to persuade themselves. And, he hopes, never again will he have to persuade himself, as he did when he first took command, to utter a phrase such as: "We will proceed expeditiously with full cognizance of the ramifications involved, including all applicable court orders."

As for those who wonder how O'Brien gets up for the game, well, let them go talk to Dick Bloch, the owner of the Phoenix Suns. Bloch was a scoffer once, too, or at least he pretended to be. During last year's NBA finals, when a lot of business types were nervously shuffling around with the players before a game in Boston Garden, Bloch leaned over to O'Brien and whispered, "What's everyone getting so excited about? What the hell, it's only a game."

Six cardiac arrests later, somewhere between the bedlam of the second overtime and the hysteria of the third, O'Brien cupped his hands and shouted through the din at Bloch, who was sitting a few boxes away, "What are you getting so excited about? What the hell, it's only a game." No one knows if Bloch heard; Bloch seemed to be having trouble breathing at the time.

"And that just about sums up my position on the game," says O'Brien. "Thank you very much."

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FOR THE RECORD

A roundup of the week Oct. 11-17

AEQUATORIAL—LEO LOUDENSLAGER, flying a Superstition Astro, won his second consecutive U.S. National title. Loudenslager, 32, defeated Bruce Hagg by 44.1 points in the competition at Shestman Texas.

BOXING—ROBERTO DURAN of Panama successfully defended his World Boxing Association lightweight championship by knocking out Alberto Robles of Costa Rica in 3:17 of the first round. On the same card, former heavyweight champion George Foreman scored a technical knockout of Mike Dennis in the fourth round of a scheduled 15-round fight (page 28).

ALFONSO ZAMORA of Mexico registered a technical knockout of Kuanan Hwang Soo-tsun in defense of his World Boxing Association bantamweight title at Jecheon, South Korea. The fight was stopped in the 10th round with the challenger draped over the ropes.

PRO FOOTBALL—The Dallas Cowboys listed five wins without a defeat, longer than any team in the NFL, then ran into the St. Louis Cardinals. The Cards rallied behind the passing of Quarterback Art Hunt for a 31-17 victory of the Cowboys. Hunt was intercepted twice but compensated with three touchdown passes (page 26). Meanwhile, the Pittsburgh Steelers finally won a game after three successive losses. The Steelers, showing glimpses of the form that won them two consecutive Super Bowl championships, defeated the AFC Central Division-leading Cincinnati Bengals 23-6. With Quarterback Terry Bradshaw, selected by an injured coach, Franco Harris provided all the offense that was accurate. He carried the ball a league-record 41 times for 143 yards and two touchdowns. The Los Angeles Rams came back from their 16-6 Monday night loss to San Francisco with a 20-12 defeat of Chicago. Quarterback Ron Jaworski, recovering from a broken shoulder suffered in a game with Atlanta on Sept. 12, came on when Pat Haden was knocked away in the second quarter and led the Rams' 72-yard drive in the fourth quarter, capped by Lawrence McCutcheon's 18-yard touchdown run. San Francisco continued to look impressive, defeating New Orleans 13-3. However, the 49ers, who reset their record to 5-1, lost Wide Receiver Willie McCutcheon with a broken leg. The Washington Redskins beat Detroit 20-7, at Safate Pat Fischer and Cornerback Joe Londerer set up Redskins scoring with Quarterback of Greg Landry passes. Redskins routed the debut of Buffalo's new head coach Jim Coak. A former All-Pro center, Coak became the Bills' coach when Joe Sabatini resigned earlier in the week. Buffalo scored with the Colts until the fourth quarter when Quarterback Bert Jones threw for two TDs in the 31-23 victory. O.J. Simpson carried 20 times for 84 yards. Champ-

ag coachmen did not help Atlanta, either, as the Falcons lost to Cleveland 20-17. Falcons Coach Marv Levy had his first victory in the week and replaced by General Manager Pat Phillip. The Browns' Greg Pease greeted Popovich by running for 19 yards and two TDs. Free Tarkenton hit 31 of 36 passes for 284 yards against an inexperienced New York Giants' secondary, leading the Browns to a 24-7 win. In the battle of the league's doorsteps, Seattle posted its first win by beating Tampa Bay 13-10 (page 77). Suddenly resurgent Green Bay won its third straight, defeating Philadelphia 28-11. Quarterback Lynn Dickey threw scoring passes of 44 and 69 yards. Miami continued to stumble, losing in overtime to Kansas City 20-17 on Sam Sanchez's 34-yard field goal. San Diego slipped by Houston 30-27, and Oakland beat Denver 31-10.

GOLF—BUTCH BAIRD defeated Mike Butler on the first hole of a sudden-death playoff to win the \$125,000 San Antonio Texas Open. Baird and Butler had finished regulation play with 15-under-par totals of 217.

HOCKEY—NHL. The Islanders remained the only unbeaten team, but it was close. They opened the week by defeating Atlanta 7-0 and setting a club record with three goals in 51 seconds. After defeating Buffalo 4-3, they had to come back from a two-goal deficit in the third period to tie Cleveland 4-4. However, Atlanta, having played one more game than the Islanders, was on top of the Patrick Division by one point. Last season's Stanley Cup champions, the Montreal Canadiens, are already pulling away in the Norris Division. They won three of their first four games, including a cup rematch with the Philadelphia Flyers 3-1. It was the 48th consecutive time the Flyers had lost to Montreal. Philadelphia—having given up an average of 3.83 goals per game as opposed to 2.61 last season—defeated a 5-5 tie with Toronto when the Maple Leafs got three goals from Larry McDonald in the first period, then blew a four-goal lead. It was the Leafs' second straight opportunity of the week, they were also tied by Los Angeles 4-4 after leading 4-0. Mike Murphy scored three goals and added an assist in Los Angeles' 7-1 win over the Washington Capitals. Rookie Don Marshall scored five goals to power the New York Rangers past Minnesota 10-4. The Rangers then proceeded to lose a war—win Marshall scored six goals—before defeating Colorado 4-3. The Rockies scored a 5-3 win over the Chicago Black Hawks, rallying from a 2-0 deficit after a fight between Chicago's Jim Harrison and Colorado's Steve Durbano resulted in Harrison's ejection. The Black Hawks held the St. Louis Division lead with a 3-0 defeat of Pittsburgh, as Geoffe Tony Esposito defeated 42 shots, and a 3-0 defeat of Minnesota. Even-

though snapped out of a first-quarter losing streak—its longest in more than two seasons—was a victory over the Detroit Red Wings. Detroit also lost to Montreal and Philadelphia. Adams Division leader Boston closed the Rangers 3-1 on Gregg Sheppard's hat trick. They defeated Toronto 5-3 and ended the week with a 5-3 upset of Montreal. St. Louis slipped past Colorado 3-2, then an embittered Vancouver in a 6-3 victory before losing to Los Angeles 6-2.

WHA. The Quebec Nordiques continued to play impressively, extending their record to 4-1 and remaining on top in the Eastern Division. The Nordiques defeated the New York Islanders 8-2, led by Serge Bernier's two goals in their highest-scoring game of the season. But at the end of the week they suffered their first loss as Cincinnati outscored them 5-3. San Diego defeated Minnesota 4-3, then beat the Calgary Cowboys 6-3. Calgary skated to Montreal 3-1. The Aeros who can Birmingham 3-0 after Mark Howe took a pass from his father Gordie to score the breakaway goal that broke a scoring log in the third period. The Indianapolis Racers defeated Cincinnati 4-3 in overtime. Franchise Racine defeated the game-winning goal at 4:36 in the extra period. In the Western Division previously undefeated Winnipeg lost to Phoenix 4-3 and San Diego 3-0.

HORSE RACING—EFFER VESCINO 1540:40, ridden by Angel Cordova Jr., won the \$112,500, mile-and-a-half Mar Wad Star Stakes at Belmont Park, breaking 1/8-length in front of Baffin and establishing an international high of 1:13.08 in 2:19.

SEATTLE SLEW 154:00, Jean Crozier in the seat, outskipped himself as one of the country's top 2-year-olds by winning the \$137,250 Champagne Stakes at Belmont. The coltation colt cut the mile in 1:34.5, breaking 5/16-length ahead of Fair the Mooner (page 65).

TENNIS—BORN BORG overpowered Arthur Ashe 4-1, 6-2 with sharp pacing skills and a booming serve to win the men's singles competition of the \$185,000 World Tennis Classic at Hilton Head Island, S.C. Evonne Cawley defeated Virginia Wade 4-3, 4-4 in the women's final.

CREDITS

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FACES IN THE CROWD



REMY FERRARI
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Ferrari, 18, won U.S. horse racing's first National Junior (age 15-19) Driving Championship at Sportsman's Park in Chicago. Ferrari guided Snow Patch to a 2:02 1/2 victory, almost five seconds faster than the horse's previous best.



DORIS HOGAN
Sedro-Buena, Wash.

Competing in the New England Meets' Swim Club meet, Mrs. Hogan, 76, set national age-group marks in the 50-yard breaststroke (1:03.7), the 100-yard freestyle (2:04.9), the 100-yard backstroke (2:55.5) and won the 50-yard free.



SHAWN O'CONNELL
Hamilton, Bermuda

Acting on a bet, O'Connell, a 33-year-old mathematics professor, trained for six months and then swam the 38 miles around Bermuda in 43 hours. In so doing he raised \$10,000 in pledges for the Bermuda Physically Handicapped Association.



TONEY MUHLOLLAND
Bismarck City, Texas

A 5'5", 140-pound tackle at Bridge City High, Muhlolland, 17, ran for 159 yards in 26 carries in a 23-17 win over Strake Jesuit of Houston. Toney also returned a kick 99 yards for a touchdown, forced a safety and recovered a fumble.



ROBERT STEWARD
Mansfield, Ohio

Steward, 14, hit 435 with 12 home runs and had a 13-2 pitching record in the Prep League. Four of his wins were no-hitters, and one was a perfect game in which he struck out 18. He also is a full-back on the Mansfield Junior High football team.



DON ANTONINI
Belmont, N.J.

A senior at Glassboro (N.J.) State College, Antonini kicked a 62-yard field goal in the Profs' 31-19 win over Salisbury State. He has kicked field goals of 43, 39, 37 and 36 yards. A baseball catcher, he was drafted by the Cincinnati Reds.

19TH HOLE THE READERS TAKE OVER

Edited by GAY FLOOD

A VOTE FOR THE MACHINE Sir:

I have to congratulate Ron Fimrite on his article *Two Big Red Machines* (Oct. 11). He did an excellent job, giving us details on each team and on the players who performed well during the season. He also made a correct prediction in choosing Cincinnati as the victor. The only part that I don't agree with is the title. There is only one true Big Red Machine, and you know which one that is.

JOE CAMPANO
Roebling, N.J.

PAST BEDTIME Sir:

If postseason baseball is to be played at night for TV's sake (SCORECARD, Oct. 11), the season must be shortened so that the World Series is completed by mid-September. Cold weather can be excruciatingly painful for players and significantly reduce the quality of play. The prospect of a Montreal-Toronto series, remote as it seems now, makes

me shiver just thinking about it. Let's make baseball a "summer game" again.

JAMES D. ANDERSON
San Francisco

Sir:

Concerning the question of whether or not World Series games should be played on Sunday night, I go with William Leggett (TV/RADIO, Oct. 11). I think they should be played in the afternoon so that we kids can watch. A Sunday night game is a disaster for us, because we have school the next day. So why not give us a break?

RALPH DEROSA
Medford, N.Y.

DOMINANT AND DEMANDING

Sir:

I am taking a course in sports officiating (taught by Irv Brown, one of the best NCAA basketball officials, if not the best) here at the University of Colorado, and I found your article on the ins and outs of refereeing (*Nobody Loves the Ruling Class*, Oct. 11) to be

as informative as it was entertaining. Perhaps I am "dominant, demanding and self-disciplined"—but I'd still very much like to pursue a career in officiating.

NICK KIRSCH
Boulder, Colo.

Sir:

As a basketball official, I thoroughly enjoyed the article. Though many of the comments concerning women officials were untrue, I agree with one statement made by Bill Russell: "Incompetence should not be confined to one sex."

It does take a special kind of person to be an official. If more fans (not to mention players) realized this, then maybe they would not be so quick to judge. If you compare the number of mistakes a player makes with the number of bad calls an official makes, and pay both according to their accuracy, the official will come out ahead.

JERALDYN JAMES
Newark, N.J.
continued

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19TH HOLE continued

DEDUCTIONS

Sir:

"What is one to make of the decision?" asks Mark Kram of the Ali-Norton mystery in Yankee Stadium (Not the Greatest Way to Go, Oct. 11). As Kram implies, it is almost impossible to say if Ali was "beaten," or if we even saw Ali at all on that night. One thing is certain, though: Mark Kram's ability to unravel the social, political and philosophical threads that entangle Muhammad Ali make Kram a detective and a writer of the first order, revealed perhaps only by Sherlock Holmes. James Joyce or Vladimir Nabokov "Observe the small facts upon which large inferences may depend," Holmes tells Watson. Surely Kram has done that time and again with delicate genius.

A year ago I told my class of freshman composition students that Mark Kram's account of the Thrilla in Manila (Lewdy, Lewdy, He's Great, Oct. 13, 1975) was probably the best piece of journalism ever written, and certainly the best I'd ever read. *Not the Greatest Way to Go* may be better.

ROBERT HAINE GRAHAM
Santa Monica, Calif

Sir:

I was greatly disappointed in Mark Kram's report. He missed two highly significant points. First, there are fighters such as George Chuvalo, Joe Bugner and Ken Norton whose style Ali would always have trouble combating. Second, it is a rare occasion when two judges and a referee can agree on 10 of the 15 rounds of any fight. Although Ali is not the same as he was on Feb. 25, 1964 in Miami Beach, he is still the "greatest." I hope we see him again.

BILL NIENSTEDT
Medford, N.Y.

Sir:

In my opinion Mark Kram is one-sided in his views and gives Ken Norton no justice in the article.

ANTHONY MURPHY
Fort Myers, Fla.

Sir:

I believe that Mark Kram summarized the feelings of most sports fans. Muhammad Ali's boxing skills have deteriorated to the point where for him to continue fighting would do nothing but tarnish his record. Whether or not the decision in the Norton fight was right is not really relevant, since Norton's performance was also far from spectacular. Probably the most accurate decision would have been a draw, since neither fighter showed any continuity or ability to control the fight.

JOSEPH HOWLEY
East Lansing, Mich.

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Yesterday

by GEORGE GIFFE

BEAR WRESTLING TOOK HOLD 100 YEARS AGO, BUT LOST WITH LENA'S REVENGE

Every so often a particularly powerful athlete manages to grab some publicity by wrestling a large and potentially dangerous animal. To date, however, there has been little clamor for the revival on a regular basis of a spectator sport once quite popular in America—man-vs.-bear wrestling. (Perhaps television people fear that post-match interviews with victorious bears would be less than scintillating, although the bears could be no more noncommittal than some athletes who come to mind.)

At any rate, it was just a century ago that the first man-bear contests were held in the United States. They were a by-product of a flurry of interest in Greco-Roman wrestling. The Greco-Roman style belies its name by having little similarity to classical wrestling. It was developed in France and became popular on the Continent about 1860 and in America a decade or so later, and persists in modified form as an Olympic sport. In order to score a fall, a wrestler had to throw his opponent so that his two shoulders touched the floor simultaneously. Neither tripping nor any holds below the hips were allowed, as a result, the bouts tended to be tediously long. But if Greco-Roman was not exactly ideal for men, the style seemed made to order for bears.

That fact caught the attention of Emil Regnier, a businessman-athlete who opened a beer shop at 104 Prince Street, New York City during the 1870s. Described by *The New York Times* as the "protean wrestler of the Western Hemisphere," and "the greatest Greco-Roman wrestler of them all, with one or two exceptions," Regnier decided to increase trade at his shop by holding wrestling matches in a tiny, adjacent building known as Athletic Hall. It was in this 300-seat auditorium on Dec. 11, 1877 that bear wrestling had its debut in America.

Eager spectators began to fill the hall at 8:45 p.m. and spent half an hour smok-

ing and talking before watching a pair of young men wrestle for another 30 minutes. This bout was followed by a musical interlude supplied by three Italians (a harpist and two violinists). Then Regnier, resplendent in blue trunks and white tights with medals prominently displayed, leaped upon the platform and "flung 50-pound weights about his head with alarming rapidity." Newspapers described him as "comely and muscular."

A few minutes later two bears from the circus and their handlers made their way through the crowd. Upon arriving on the platform, one of the animals proceeded to sit up on its haunches while, according to the *Times*, "the other, a tall brown fellow, for whom music had charms, waltzed with irresistible drollness to the tune played by the sunny Italian." Finally the fourth participant, a wrestler named William Heyster, made his entrance. After acknowledging the cheers of the crowd, Heyster—nicknamed the "Oak of the Rhine"—prepared to square off against the larger of the two bears.

Certain precautions had been taken to protect the men. Both bears wore iron muzzles, and their foreclaws had been rounded off with a file. This did not diminish their enormous strength, which soon became apparent when Heyster was unable to throw his opponent to the ground. "The bear did not understand the fun of the thing," the *Times* reported. "He did not want to be thrown, but he exhibited no desire to throw his opponent." The match therefore was declared a tie.

Regnier fared much better. After considerable grappling, he managed to throw his bear—but was dragged down with it. As the crowd cheered and the sawdust from the stage filled the air, Regnier finally managed to roll the animal over on its back and hold its head and shoulders to the platform.

A bit more than a week later, bear wrestling graduated to the respectability of the Théâtre Français. Regnier was back and, according to one newspaper report, his opponent this time was "a most sagacious brute" named Lena, who "poked her iron muzzle in his face and unwhimsical crooks upon his legs" was eventually disposed to pull his hair and used every artifice within the range of her sagacity to defeat him. Despite the 300-pound bear's tactics, Regnier eventually managed to secure a good grip

under her forelegs, threw her to the canvas and was declared the winner.

The second match featured a wrestler named Theobald Bauer—who happened to be Regnier's partner in the beer shop—against a large bear named Martin. Although introduced as "unvanquished," Martin was not a very willing fighter. Backing away all the time, he soon had Bauer "swearing audibly" in his efforts to get a grip. After many minutes Bauer finally succeeded in flinging the bear to the ground.

Lena and Regnier then went at it again, this time with a different result. Having learned something, no doubt, Lena grasped Regnier around the hips, got a crook on his leg and brought him down. Despite the illegal tripping, referee Fred Englehardt declared Lena the winner.

On Christmas Day, 1877 the sport had become sufficiently popular to entice an audience of "sporting gentlemen" to Central Park Garden for a series of bouts. Regnier and Lena, obviously the host of both species, were cheered as they came onto the stage. They held each other tightly for two minutes before Lena tossed Regnier to the floor "on one point, with a thud." The bear then pressed its advantage, "clawed him, squeezed him, and poked . . . about his shoulders as if . . . eating the Frenchman's ears." Eventually Regnier got to his feet and won the match.

A short time later, after Regnier and Bauer had closed their saloon, referee-entrepreneur Fred Englehardt formed a troupe, which consisted of Lena, Martin and a third bear named Martin, to tour the states and promote the sport. At first all went well. Then Lena, perhaps smarting at the string of close losses to Regnier, grabbed another wrestler named Jean Francis Borne and squeezed him until he nearly collapsed. Borne was taken to New York Hospital, where an examination showed internal injuries. On April 14, 1878, Borne died, and bear wrestling went into a severe decline. New York Deputy Coroner Miller may have tried to save the sport by reporting after the autopsy that Borne's system was "in a very bad condition, caused by first living, and that he was also suffering from pyaemia, following a disease contracted in his youth," but according to legend the real cause of Borne's demise was Lena's revenge, and so far it has lasted a hundred years.

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